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`Explain concept of globalisation'

reports on "Dewan Rakyat" by Ramlan Said; Hayati Hayatudin; Ainin Mohd
THE Government has been urged to explain the concept of globalisation and
its effects on the people.

The call was made by Datuk Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah (BN-Tambun), saying
that many Malaysians were still unaware of the impact of globalisation.

He said recent surveys carried out by the Ministry of International
Trade and Industry found that 70 per cent of small and medium scale
industries were still in the dark about the Asean Free Trade Area
beginning in 2003.

"If those directly involved in the industry do not know what Afta is and
how it would affect the country, what more the men in the street?

"Many people have a fear of globalisation but we have to come to terms
with it and accept the fact that it is coming... we have to adapt," Ahmad
Husni said when debating the 2001 Budget tabled in Parliament last Friday.

"We have to join the international market and global trend so that we
will not be left behind. We have to be involved in the process if we want
to be sustainable in the future," Ahmad Husni said.

The government backbencher cited nations in Africa and South America
which had been left behind in the new economy because they had isolated
themselves.

On privatisation projects, Ahmad Husni said the Government must look at
all angles of the company and industry before privatising it, and give it
a more competitive edge.

"Competitiveness must exist ... one corporation in the industry alone
does not give rise to competition.

"Maybe the Government should come up with an Anti-Trust Act or
Competition Act to make sure a competitive environment exists among the
corporations," he said.

Ahmad Husni also called on the Government to review the bankruptcy laws
so that it did not put pressure on entrepreneurs.

"Entrepreneurs take risks for the country and the nation benefits from
their undertakings. Don't dampen their spirit because we need them," he
said.

On the Budget which did not provide a bonus to civil servants this year,
Ahmad Husni said the Government had a contingency fund of RM2 billion and
this should be used as bonus for them.

"Give the bonus to the lower level civil servants like the
administrative staff so that they can prepare for the coming festive
season," he said.

Echoing this, Abdul Rahman Yusof (Keadilan-Kemaman) said it was unfair
of the Government not to reward civil servants this year as they had
worked hard and were the backbone of the nation's development.

"It seems the Barisan Nasional Government is more keen to uphold its
political agenda rather than meet the needs of the people," he said.

Abdul Rahman said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had
promised a surplus budget but instead had presented a deficit budget.

"For four straight years we have been faced with a deficit budget and
this is worrying.

"The only good thing about this budget is the tax abolishment for the
handicapped," he said.

Earlier, Robert Lau (BN-Sibu) called for more flights from Kuala Lumpur
to Sibu to woo investors.

Datuk Peter Tinggom anak Kemarau (BN-Saratok) said the opposition should be held responsible for creating disunity among the people in the country. He blamed the opposition for raising sensitive issues to create rifts in the society.

"They are the obstacle to development.

"They should learn from history and not let their different political ideologies and opinions create disunity and a feeling of hatred among the people."

Tinggom also urged the Government to ensure that there were allocations for those who were left behind in development.

As for rural schools, he said, it was only right for the Government to not just increase their number in remote areas, but also look into the quality of these schools.

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