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Abdullah-PAS

PAS NOT CAPABLE OF DEVELOPING TERENGGANU, SAYS ABDULLAH

KEPALA BATAS, April 29 (Bernama) -- The PAS government in Terengganu could not develop the state because its leaders lack ideas and are incapable of solving the state's financial problems, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

The deputy prime minister said PAS' failure to plan effectively for development was obvious when the federal government started extending special payment directly to the people in Terengganu.

Although there were still many poor people in Terengganu, PAS leaders were so preoccupied with religious obligations that they seemed to forget the people's needs in this world, he said when opening the Kepala Batas Umno division meeting.

"I am not saying it is not important to fulfil religious obligations but they have forgotten to work for the good in this world, and it is clear that Terengganu PAS has failed in its duty to run the state," said Abdullah, who is Umno deputy president.

To hide its failure to develop Terengganu, PAS had accused Umno of snatching away its oil royalty, said Abdullah, who is also Kepala Batas Umno chief.

Citing Penang as an example, Abdullah said the state had continued to develop and prosper even after its free port status was withdrawn by the federal government.

He said the Penang Gerakan government then led by Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu had administered the state well and developed its industrial sector to bring in more revenue. Gerakan was briefly in the opposition before joining the Barisan Nasional.

"Although Penang lost its free port status, it is still capable of achieving success because of its leaders' ability to plan and administer," he said.

Abdullah said parties like PAS and DAP criticised Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his economic recovery measures but the opposition leaders themselves lacked ideas to overcome the problem.

If the opposition had been voted into power in an election then, it would have called in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to revive the economy, he said.

"Just look at what happened in neighbouring countries which allowed the IMF to implement its economic rehabilitation measures," he said.

The inability of PAS to develop Terengganu and Kelantan should serve as a reminder to the people not to give power to people without experience in running a state or country, he said.

He said PAS could not possibly rule Penang because the Malays are the minority in the state and they realise that through Umno's struggles they could share power in the Gerakan-led government.

-- BERNAMA

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