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Abdullah: Police will stop any form of extremism

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PUTRAJAYA, Sun. - The police will take preventive action to stop any form of extremism which may be detrimental to the country's multi-racial composition, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

He said early and preventive action must be taken, lest extremism took root in the country.

Assuring the public that the authorities were always vigilant of extremist activities, Abdullah said: "Malaysians must reject any form of extremism. It will not be condoned or allowed to take root."

Speaking to reporters at the Home Ministry's Family Day at Taman Wetlands, Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, said the police would take appropriate action against any parties propogating extremism.

He said this when asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement at the MCA general assembly yesterday that Malay extremists had garnered support and inter-racial torelance was waning, especially among the younger generation.

Abdullah said he believed the younger generation was drifting apart because the elders, especially those with a political agenda, taught them to be narrow-minded like there was no need to mix with other races.

Unlike Umno, Abdullah said, Opposition parties like Pas advocated extremism to garner support from the people.

It also misused the religion so much so youth were now willing to resort to violence as shown during the recent by-elections in Pendang and Anak Bukit.

Abdullah said what was worrying was extremism and violent tactics adopted by one party could force its adversaries to also display similar sentiments.

"When this happens, a dangerous situation will develop."

On whether the Government should take the rap for being too lenient in dealing with the threats of extremism, Abdullah disagreed, saying the ban on political ceramah was an example of the preventive measures taken.

He said the move was proven right as speakers at such ceramah were known to indulge in lies, instigation and insulting people.

On Dr Mahathir's statement that Abdullah might lead Barisan Nasional in the next general election, the Deputy Prime Minister said Dr Mahathir was only stating a possibility.

"To me, if the time comes for me to lead the election, surely I will have to carry out my duties."

Abdullah said Dr Mahathir was still the leader, hence he (Abdullah) would continue carrying out his duties as Deputy Prime Minister.

"He is my boss. For example, in the army, there is only one general at the top. Likewise in Umno, Barisan Nasional, Government, the leader is Dr Mahathir and I am his deputy.

"Therefore, I fully understand that my role at this moment is as his deputy."