

PM shows

deep

STAR - 2 NOV. 2003

interest

in unity,

says Khalil

PENANG: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's call to the *rakyat* to work with him shows his deep interest in strengthening unity among Malaysians, said Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob.

He said Abdullah often stressed on unity among the different races, as it was the core factor to ensure Barisan Nasional's victory in the next general election.

"His pledge to care for the development of other states, apart from his home state Penang, shows his impartial nature and commitment towards the well-being of all Malaysians.

"So, they can be assured of his leadership, especially with this being one of his first pledges to the nation," he said after welcoming Abdullah at Penang International Airport yesterday.

On Abdullah's plan to lead the party into the next general election, Khalil said: "Even Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it will be left to Pak Lah, so we will leave it to him. He has his own style of doing things.

"However, I believe policies will continue as before because the Cabinet works in a collective way. This is what we call collective responsibility," he said.

On Abdullah's ability to stand among leaders of other nations, Khalil said his nine years of experience as Foreign Minister had given him the necessary exposure.

"Abdullah has the capability of steering the nation towards greater heights. He can handle any international event given his experience," he said.

Khalil, who is also Information Minister, said the ministry would continue to disseminate the Government's message to the people.