

03 NOV 2003

Abdullah-Leadership

DISPLAY EXEMPLARY POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, ELECTED REPS TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 3 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today that it is incumbent upon elected representatives to display exemplary political leadership which can only be effective if they are respected.

He said that they must inculcate the values of honesty, determination and dedication if they wish to be held up as examples for others to emulate.

"We must be open and ready to accept criticism and contrary views to ensure that the culture of democracy thrives," he said in his maiden official speech as Prime Minister in the Dewan Rakyat here.

Tabling a motion of thanks to his predecessor, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in the speech themed "Inheriting Success and Building a Future of Excellence, Glory and Distinction", Abdullah said that they must cultivate an image that was clean, incorruptible, modest and beyond suspicion.

He said that democracy would flourish if all its participants behave responsibly.

However, Abdullah said: "Democracy does not mean absolute freedom. Issues that inflame religious, racial and cultural sentiments should not be sensationalised, while attempts to undermine national security and public order must be dealt with firmly."

He said that the government cannot compromise when dealing with the threats posed by extremism, terrorism and militancy.

"Therefore, the government's firmness in dealing with these threats must be fully supported to ensure the security and peace of the nation," he said.

The Prime Minister said that Malaysians must uphold the principles of the Rukunegara -- Belief in God; Loyalty to the King and Country; Supremacy of the Constitution, Sovereignty of the Law; Good Behaviour and Morality.

-- BERNAMA

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