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Abdullah-Gallery

GALERIA SRI PERDANA NOT TO IDOLISE TUN DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- The opening of Galeria Sri Perdana here is to give the people a chance to understand the outstanding leadership style of Malaysia's fourth prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

"This gallery is not to idolise Dr Mahathir. He doesn't want to be idolised, he's not comfortable being idolised, (he) doesn't want praises.

"In fact, when he was leading the nation, he did not want buildings to be named after him. He said it's enough if he is known as someone who has helped develop the country," the prime minister said.

He said this when opening Galeria Sri Perdana in Jalan Jalan Damansara, here, which was formerly Tun Dr Mahathir's official residence, Sri Perdana.

The building, occupied by Dr Mahathir from Aug 23, 1983 to Oct 10, 1999, houses his personal collections and artefacts and gives the people an insight into the lifestyle of Dr Mahathir and his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, besides displaying the rooms where many important events took place.

Abdullah said Dr Mahathir's children also felt embarrassed whenever their father was praised.

He said that whatever collection displayed at the gallery was to remind the people of Dr Mahathir's leadership.

"Tun Dr Mahathir's successes must be immortalised for future generations and galleries like this can teach us, especially the youngsters, so that we follow his example," he said.

He said Dr Mahathir's good mission, practices and policies must be perpetuated and as heir to the nation's leadership, he would ensure that the policies were continued.

"Everything takes time but we must ensure that the nation continues to grow,"

"If the walls of this gallery could speak, they would tell us the sweet and bitter tales. But they can't, and what the National Archives has done (by turning Sri Perdana into a gallery) should be lauded because many important events, meetings and visits of foreign leaders are immortalised," he added.

He said the gallery would relate what happened during the 16 years that Dr Mahathir spent at Sri Perdana as prime minister.

He said Malaysia was proud of Dr Mahathir's leadership in not only developing the country but also in garnering the full support of the people.

"Leaders in the past were chosen democratically and they held the trust of the people. They were chosen by the people and they were not dictators. They fulfilled the people's aspirations to develop the country and bring prosperity to the race," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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