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Abdullah-Vision 2020

I WILL CONTINUE VISION 2020 - ABDULLAH

SEREMBAN, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said tonight he will pursue efforts to realise Vision 2020 after taking over the country's helm after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad retires next month.

He said he would continue to initiate plans and programmes to achieve the objectives of Vision 2020 to transform Malaysia into a developed and respected nation.

"We've planned Vision 2020 and we want all efforts to be geared towards realising its goals.

"I will ensure that with the unity and whole-heartedness of the people, we'll achieve the objectives of Vision 2020 together to turn Malaysia into a developed nation for all the races in our country," he said when launching the 20th Chinese Cultural Festival at the Seremban Municipal Council field.

Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Abdul Samad and MCA President Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting were among the more than 15,000 people present at the festival organised by the Negeri Sembilan Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

This was why the Barisan Nasional (BN) government, which represents all the races in Malaysia, constantly made efforts to boost the country's development and seek new markets for Made-In-Malaysia products, he said.

"By having new markets, we can increase the income of businessmen, the people and our country.

"We're serious in developing our country. I hope the people will give their continued support to the government," he said.

Since Malaysia consists of various races of diverse religions, unity in diversity needs to be enhanced and preserved to ensure peace and racial harmony could be guaranteed, he said.

"In diversity, we can seek unity. Unity in diversity - that's our country. If we have unity in diversity, we'll have the strength and vigour to progress.

"If we're strong, we can take care of our country to remain peaceful, nobody can disturb Malaysia.

"We must be united, cooperate, respect one another and work hard to be really independent so that Malaysia will be respected and held in high esteem by others," he said.

Abdullah said the people must be wise in supporting the present government which had proven its mettle in running the country.

"We're the ones who will decide the country's future and not others. When we can take care of our country, only then others will respect us. We must be brave to defend our own country," he said.

This was evident when Malaysia decided not to accept the financial assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the financial crisis in 1997 but made the right decision by pegging the Ringgit at RM3.80 to the US dollar, he said.

Although the government's decision was criticised initially by various quarters, the seriousness and hard work of all to revive the economy had resulted in the economy to recover.

"We're not like our neighbours which accepted the IMF aid and until now their economy is still uncertain," he said.

Abdullah said the IMF Chief, who was in Malaysia last week, praised the

Malaysian government's measures to stimulate the economy and wished to learn how the country managed its economy.

"Malaysia is now recognised to have the most vibrant economy in the Asean region," he added.

-- BERNAMA

APG TS