

28 JUN 2003

Abdullah-Development (Pix)

ABDULLAH GIVES ASSURANCE ON CONTINUITY IN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

JEMPOL, June 28 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has pledged to continue with development programmes drawn up by his predecessor when he takes over as prime minister in October.

The deputy prime minister said it had been the tradition of Umno and the Barisan Nasional (BN) to ensure that whoever succeeded the prime minister would continue with the plans that had been drawn up.

"We can see this from the time of Tunku (Abdul Rahman), whose efforts were continued by Tun (Abdul) Razak (Hussein), then Tun Hussein (Onn) and now Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"When the time comes, Pak Lah will continue to give attention to developing Felda schemes, this is my promise," he said at a leader-with-the-people gathering at Felda Raja Alias II, Bandar Seri Jempol here today.

Abdullah said the government needed the people's support to implement development programmes while the people needed a stable government to continue enjoying progress.

He said a government which thought only of its own interests and those of its friends would last only term.

"The tradition of the BN government is to ensure the people's welfare. That is why the people support the BN government," he said.

The people's strong support for the government during the 1997 economic crisis had enabled the leadership to overcome the problem without foreign intervention, he said.

"The prime minister could speak firmly because the majority of the people supported the government's action then. (Datuk Seri) Dr Mahathir Mohamad's firm stand was to protect our interests so that other parties could not create trouble for the country," he said.

Abdullah also said the government would form Felda Jaya in Felda areas throughout the country to gather products from these schemes for better focus in production and marketing.

This concept included developing agriculture-based small- and medium-scale industry (SMI) to boost the income of settlers and create job and economic opportunities for the second generation in Felda schemes, he said.

He said that the pioneer project would be implemented in Negeri Sembilan, Perak and Pahang.

He said Felda settlers possessed various skills like sewing, cooking and handicraft making that could be developed into profitable economic activities.

"They are undertaking these activities on a small scale, and when the Felda Jaya concept and SMI are expanded they can develop these areas," he said.

-- BERNAMA
APG SBS YBY