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Abdullah-Umno/(With Pix)

SUPPORT LEADERS APPOINTED AFTER DR M RETIRES, SAYS ABDULLAH

JEMPOL, June 28 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today asked Umno leaders and members to give solid support to leaders appointed after Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad retired in October.

The deputy prime minister said the support of leaders and members at the grassroots was crucial to ensure Umno remained stable, strong and vibrant as a party that serves as the linchpin to the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN).

"Umno is a responsible party and is the backbone of the BN. Hence, we must first ensure that when Dr Mahathir officially leaves office and new leaders are named, they must be supported so that Umno will remain stable, strong and vibrant," he said when speaking at a leader-with-the-people gathering at Felda Raja Alias 11 in Bandar Seri Jempol, here.

Abdullah, who is also Umno deputy president, said many people have made assumptions that when Dr Mahathir leaves, the country would be in chaos, Umno members would quarrel among themselves, fight for positions and the country's economy would be unstable.

He said Umno was an old party and rich in experience and would continue to ensure peace and stability for continued progress and prosperity.

"This is the promise of Umno leaders at the recent Umno General Assembly to ensure the party remains safe, strong and influential and give confidence to other component parties in the BN to have faith with Umno," he said.

At the just-concluded assembly, more than 10,000 people, including foreign political observers, came to listen and witness the process of the party's leadership transition, he said.

"All of them know no political party will hold an assembly that is witnessed by more than 10,000 people. Umno has proved that it is a party that makes decisions for the interests of all Malaysians," he said.

About 5,000 people and Felda settlers attended the gathering.

-- BERNAMA

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