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6,000 guests at joint Gerakan-MCA open house

PENANG, Fri. - Describing Malaysia as a "blessed" nation rich in natural resources and not plagued with natural disasters, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi urged the people to help the Government exploit "all things favourable" in achieving maximum benefits.

Malaysians should always work closely with the Government to achieve long lasting unity and prosperity.

"Our country is in the best of situations," he said at the joint Gerakan-MCA Chinese New Year open house at the Penang International Sports Arena in Bayan Baru here.

Also present were Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, State MCA chairman Wong Kam Hoong and former Penang Chief Minister Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu.

About 6,000 guests turned up for the event, the first joint Gerakan-MCA Chinese New Year open house since the two Barisan Nasional component parties expressed their intention to merge as a single party.

Abdullah said the Government and the Barisan Nasional, spurred by the people's continued support and confidence, were determined to work harder for continued peace and prosperity.

"This is our understanding and commitment in the BN and the Government," he said.

Abdullah reminded the people not to slip into complacency in the wake of the encouraging forecasts of Malaysia's economic and political outlook by economic and political analysts, calling instead for harder work to ensure that the country attains better economic performance.

The celebration was organised by the Chinese Assembly Hall here.

Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, he said, had charted Malaysia's future as a developed nation under Vision 2020 and that it was his responsibility and that of his BN colleagues to achieve it.

"This is our vision and mission ... to achieve Vision 2020," he said.