

29/02/2004

PM: We do good for all regardless of their beliefs

Noor Adzman Baharuddin; Aida Ahmad

KEPALA BATAS, Sat. - Despite Malaysia being an Islamic nation, the Government has never neglected the needs of non-Muslims because Islam requires Muslims to observe fardhu kifayah, the obligation to do good for all regardless of belief or race.

"We are not a secular nation as charged by certain quarters," Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said at the launch of the State-level Islam Hadhari, a convention on Islamic State Administration, at the Dewan Milenium today. Also present were Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Dr Hilmi Yahaya and Religious Adviser to the Prime Minister, Tan Sri Dr Abdul Hamid Othman.

"A secular state does not care about religion or the people's welfare."

Pas, in many of its ceramah, had accused the Umno-led ruling Government of advocating a secular state.

"Don't anyone dare accuse the Government or country as being secular," he said. "We take care of the people, we give them the best so that they could continue to enjoy peace and harmony and greater progress."

Abdullah said he saw no reason why Pas can't join in efforts to achieve bigger and better things for the people.

"I am willing to listen to their views too," he said. "Don't just hit out at the Government."

Abdullah said Malaysians have participated well in nation building and would continue to do so to help realise Vision 2020.

"As Prime Minister, I am duty-bound to ensure continuity of the peace and progress that I inherited from Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"I am also the leader of a coalition party which represents the different communities. We have and must always continue to work together for the benefit of the people."

Abdullah said a government should be caring, efficient and able to meet the people's needs.

In his speech, Abdullah called on the people to continue "working with me" to further enrich the nation.

"We must also safeguard the country's stability and economy to ensure Malaysia achieves greater heights for the benefit of future generations."