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Abdullah: People not happy with way Pas is running two States

KELAPA BATAS, Sat. - The people of Kelantan and Terengganu are increasingly dissatisfied with the way their States are run by Pas, Umno deputy president and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said tonight.

"Umno has many issues to raise with Pas in the two States, but more importantly, the people in Kelantan and Terengganu too have many issues to pick on with the Pas Governments," he said after the Kepala Batas Umno division meeting.

Abdullah, the division chairman, was asked if Pas had credible issues to raise with the Barisan Nasional in the coming general election.

He said: "I don't know what issues Pas might have, but we must be prepared to explain to the people whatever issues that might be raised.

"We (BN) have many issues, including the failures of the Pas Governments, but the people in Kelantan and Terengganu have been making known their dissatisfaction against the Pas rule.

"On Umno's part, our information bureau must equip members with the relevant information so that they can explain to the people."

For instance, he said, the Government was not out to do away with the Sekolah Agama Rakyat (people's religious schools), but was committed to improving the education system of such schools.

"It is a well-known fact that the academic achievement of students at such schools is inferior to their counterparts in national schools."

On the outcome of tonight's meeting, Abdullah said all communities would be given the opportunity to participate in development projects in Kepala Batas.

Later, Abdullah attended a dinner organised by the People's Progressive Party (PPP) here.

In his speech he said he would continue with the BN tradition of making decisions by consensus.

"I will still hold on to this tradition, which is well accepted by all the BN component parties."

He said he had worked a long time with Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the Prime Minister believed that a decision made should be one that was fair and acceptable to all BN component parties.

This, he said, was the BN tradition.

Abdullah said the BN was a reflection of the unity of the people of various races, which held firmly to the spirit of consensus, tolerance and respect for each other.