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Civil servants pledge their support for Abdullah

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsudin Osman has pledged the support of the nation's 960,000 civil servants for Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

He said the civil service would continue to give its best to the nation.

He said this in his opening speech at the Prime Minister's Department Quality Day function, read out by senior deputy chief secretary Datuk Muhamad Mohamed Noor.

"With Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the helm, the image and performance of the civil service had been raised to a high level with many changes and innovations implemented.

"Let us now renew our resolve and determination to zealously carry out our duties to improve the performance of the civil service under the new leadership, to serve the people better."

Samsudin said Abdullah had outlined five basic principles for the civil service to improve its efficiency and potential in his keynote address at the opening of the Eighth Civil Servants Conference at the National Institute of Public Administration on June 26.

"The principles are zero tolerance for substandard performance, seeking accuracy, timeliness and volume in work, appreciation for orderliness and cleanliness, a customer-focused public sector and adherence to public ethics.

"I truly believe that if all the departments and agencies diligently implement these five principles, the quality of their service to the public will greatly improve."

Samsudin said he had instructed government agencies to review and upgrade their respective Clients' Charter in accordance with the changes taking place around them, especially in terms of ICT usage and office automation.

He said the various units and divisions within the PM's Department had already started upgrading their Clients' Charter.

Samsudin also called on heads of units, divisions and sections of government departments to immediately act on public complaints against officers who shirked their duties.

"I am still receiving complaints of officers who go missing from their seats, misuse office vehicles, chat incessantly, don't answer telephones, deal roughly with clients and ask for bribes.

"There are also many other negative activities going on in government departments that the public is not aware of, such as cheating on punch-in cards, truancy, avoiding work, doing personal work during office hours and constantly being on the telephone."

Samsudin said department heads should also take action against civil servants who spent too much time in the canteen.

"Work starts at 8.15am and the staff and officers should have their breakfast before that."