

BN's setback : PM admits fault
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Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today admitted that he was among the factors which caused the Barisan Nasional (BN) ruling coalition to suffer heavy losses in the March 8 polls. MCPX

Abdullah - who is also the Umno president - said he felt responsible for making the best efforts to rehabilitate BN and Umno.

NONE"I feel I am the reason for the spoilt votes for the Barisan Nasional. And I feel responsible to do what's best to rehabilitate the BN and Umno," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

The prime minister was speaking to reporters after attending a meeting with Johor Menteri Besar Abdul Ghani Othman, who also heads the state Umno liaison body.

Also present at the meeting were International Trade and Industry Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, who is also Umno vice-president, Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar, Higher Education Minister Mohamed Khaled Nordin and Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Shahrir Abdul Samad.

However, Education Minister and Umno Youth head Hishammuddin Hussein did not attend the meeting as he is currently in Paris on official duty.

Unfulfilled promises

Meanwhile, Abdullah said he understood that many changes promised to the people earlier had not been fulfilled by the government until now.

He said the changes promised to the people covered various aspects such as the judicial system, eradication of corrupt practices, bringing down the crime rate and fostering inter-racial relations in the country.

Abdullah said the changes implemented by the government needed time before it could show positive results.

"As such, I will continue to give emphasis to bring the changes promised to the people. In fact, they had already been included in the pledges of the BN government in the (election) manifesto in 2004," he said.

Working hard

Abdullah said since 2004 he has been working hard to overcome several problems such as the country's large financial deficit, economic issues and development as well as the renewal of government-linked companies (GLCs).

As for the policies drafted by the government, the prime minister said the government always ensures that it is accepted by the people and any mistakes are rectified as soon as

possible.

On the meeting, Abdullah said they discussed openly about issues concerning Umno's position.

"I took the opportunity to speak on several issues which must be considered together (by the state Umno liaison body)," he said.

The prime minister said the state liaison body had also forwarded several suggestions to rebuild the party but he declined to elaborate on this.

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