

PM: Don't be afraid to try new things



Global Leadership Forum

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Malaysia needs confidence and maturity for a cutting edge in this competitive world.

What Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi wants to instil, to diminish the fear of failure and criticism among Malaysians, is a climate where people with new ideas can be heard and where good ideas receive the resources for development.

The fear of failure and of trying out new things was a cultural issue, he said.

"This fear inhibits innovation at all levels, in the classroom, in the workplace, in universities and in government agencies."

He said people would only invest in being creative and innovative if there was room and safety for new and even dissenting views.

"When there is a climate of maturity and support, people will want to engage in a way that is responsible and constructive," he added.

The Prime Minister shared his aspiration with participants attending the Global Leadership Forum titled "Leadership, Innovation and Branding: The Way Forward" here today.

The two-day forum, organised by the Foundation for the Future, an international think-tank, and the Perdana Leadership Foundation, will be addressed by political and business leaders who



SHARING OF OPINIONS: Abdullah with Stiglitz (left) at the Global Leadership Forum, which was held at the KL Convention Centre, yesterday.

succeeded through innovation and were not afraid of failure.

They include Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel laureate in economics, Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, Datuk Tony Fernandes, the founder of AirAsia, and Abdullah's predecessor, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister also cited innovation, branding and leadership as vital traits for Malaysia in an increasingly competitive world. But, he warned, "neither innovation nor branding will come about without the leader-

ship to provide the vision as well as momentum".

Abdullah said the question of innovation — whether in technology, science, business, social work or government projects — went beyond education and involved mindset and culture.

Internally, he said, Malaysia must shoulder the work required to truly live up to the aspiration of being branded as a developed nation.

"I am determined to make Malaysia well known for its strong values and for its efficacy

and efficiency," he said.

Abdullah acknowledged that Malaysia had failed to brand itself successfully as a peaceful Islamic nation, citing the case of a well-travelled individual who was refused travel insurance to Malaysia by a major insurance company due to a perceived risk of religious terrorism here.

"Our knowledge of ourselves is clearly not shared by the world. We do not promote or endorse terrorism or violence."