

# Compete with one another, States urged

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ALOR GAJAH, Tues. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today called on all States to compete with each other in the pursuit of economic development for the benefit of the people.

He encouraged each State to capitalise on its strength, be it tourism, electronics or other activities.

Abdullah was very happy with the progress of the States.

"There is no 'fullstop' to what they can do — there is so much more room for growth," he said.

He was speaking after launching the 67ha D-Paradise Tropical Fruit World and Aboriginal Village here.

He said the RM30 million project was an exemplary venture into agro-tourism, which others should emulate.

Malacca, he said, had rightly concentrated on tourism as its main income generator and economic catalyst, as there was abundant potential in the small State for the sector.

"Tourism is all-encompassing. It will not only benefit related industries such as handicraft and hospitality, but also agriculture and possibly even biotechnology, as is planned for this fruit farm."

D-Paradise is now in talks with educational institutions in Japan and Europe to conduct research and development at the farm for the purpose of commercialising



**FRUITFUL VENTURE:** Abdullah admiring a variety of banana called *Pisang Seribu*. Looking on is D-Paradise Tropical Fruit World and Aboriginal Village chief executive Lee Wah Chong.

its produce.

Abdullah also praised Selangor, Johor and Perak for their agro-tourism ventures.

In the pursuit of development, he reminded Malaysians not to be shy of learning and borrowing

from others.

He also called on them to improve on the overseas examples they choose to emulate.

However, he said while the "borrowing" of foreign products and cultures was good, they

should also capitalise on local ones, such as traditional *batik* and *songket*.

"The *batik* and *songket* industries have just begun to gain popularity overseas and there are more markets to be tapped."