

PM: Budget to ease rakyat's burden



ONE VOICE: Abdullah, Gerakan president Oatuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik and deputy president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon waving the Jalur Gemilang while singing the Negara-ku.

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the Budget 2007 was tailored to meet the people's needs to help reduce their burden of expenditure owing to the rising cost of living.

He said that several incentives introduced in the budget like the abolition of examination fees and allowances for children from poor families for their educational needs were some of the moves that could reduce the people's expenditure.

"I feel the hardship faced by the people who lamented that their disposable income had

shrunk while the price of essential items and inflation had gone up following the increase of fuel prices.

"So what do we do to reduce the people's burden? Increase the wages or provide incentives that could help them to reduce their daily expenditure.

"I feel that one of the ways to help reduce the people's burden was to pay for school expenses and this could help in many ways to increase their disposable income," Abdullah said in his speech before opening the Gerakan National Delegates Conference at Menara PGRM here yesterday.

The Prime Minister also said that the incentives provided by the government would be given to all regardless of race or creed and that government would always continue to find ways and means to help the people cushion the impact of rising inflation so that they could live comfortably.

Abdullah said that the budget emphasised the development of human capital in terms of providing quality education and infrastructure to schoolchildren by removing obstacles like financial constraints or basic needs to enable them to excel.

On politics, Abdullah said it was the Barisan Nasional's tradition to thrash out and solve any misunderstanding among the coalition parties in the best possible manner.

He said that unity was the keyword that had brought the party to where it is today, adding that problems and misunderstanding were part and parcel of a party based on the power-sharing concept.

He said every problem could be solved as long as it was done in the Barisan spirit of respecting each other's views in the quest to find an amicable solution.