

Abdullah: I'm open to criticisms

KUANTAN: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi says he is prepared for criticisms as long as they are sincere and are for the good of the people.

"I am not the smartest ... there are others who are smarter, but I am the prime minister and it is not wrong for me to take some time to listen to more views in order to get the best opinion," he said yesterday.

Addressing a gathering of Pahang civil servants, which was also attended by his deputy Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak, here, he said a certain decision was best achieved after seeking the views from more people rather than from an individual.

"Oftentimes, a unilateral decision may cause mistakes," said Abdullah, who cited an example of a fatwa whereby the views of an ulama can be questioned compared with a fatwa based on discussions among many ulama.

Citing an example from the cabinet ministers' meeting on Wednesday, he said he gave all the ministers the opportunity to air their views on each matter that was discussed.

"Yesterday (Wednesday). I chaired the cabinet ministers' meeting to discuss next year's budget. Nowadays, our ministers" talk a lot, not like before," he said.

The prime minister also mentioned the factors which should be followed by all leaders, administrators and members of the public service in carrying out their responsibility: human and caring; trustworthy, fair and just; and sincerity.

In his speech, he reiterated the importance of sincerity in all aspects, including in carrying out the development projects and the national mission.

Abdullah said the government depended fully on the civil servants in realising the projects under the Ninth Malaysia Plan.

However, in implementing the projects, there were certain quarters behaving like "demons" who tried to disrupt development efforts as they felt they were smarter than others.

At another event in conjunction with his two-day visit to Pahang, the prime minister advised the people to practise the collective approach.

"Don't ever adopt an approach which can jeopardise unity, an approach that makes consensus and cooperation difficult to achieve. This should never be practised," he told some 10,000 people at the Sukpa closed stadium. - Bernama