

PM: Helping Malays a national mission

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PUTRAJAYA: Budding Malay entrepreneurs can now look forward to a helping hand in business from Umno's very own one-stop agency — Gagasan Badan Ekonomi Melayu (Gabem).

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said with the formation of Gabem, Bumiputeras should start embarking on an economic mission of their own to improve their status.

"Malays should help Malays and start a migration of the mind for a better life and to be more advanced," Abdullah said in Putrajaya yesterday while launching Gabem.

A brainchild of Umno, Gabem's working committee is spearheaded by its adviser Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo and chaired by former Malacca chief minister Tan Sri Rahim Tamby Chik.

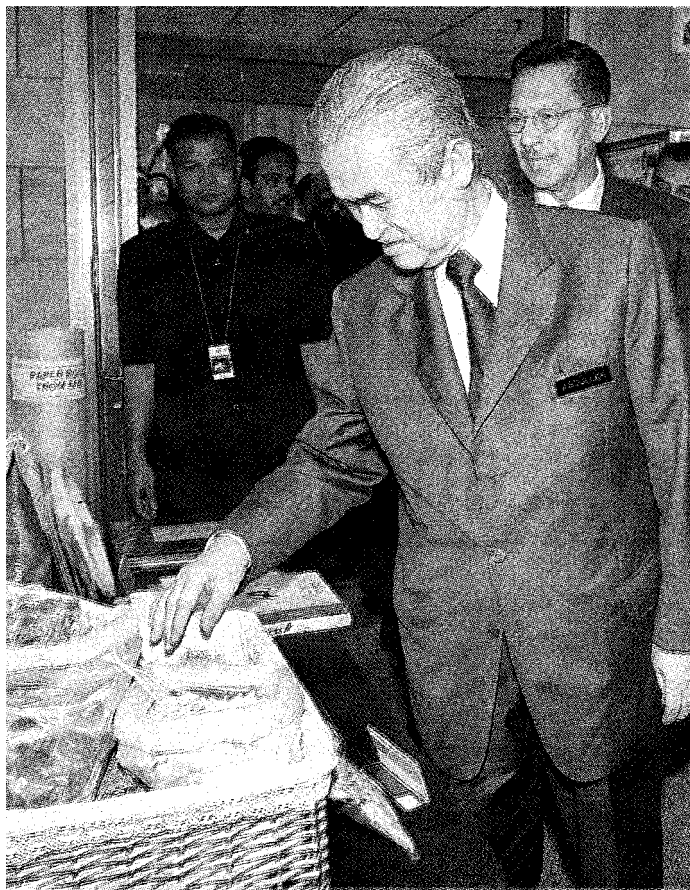
Abdullah and Deputy Prime Minister and Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Najib Razak were appointed patrons of Gabem at the function that was attended by more than 3,000 Umno members as well as corporate leaders.

"The struggle to strengthen the economy of the Malays is an economic mission that has to become a national mission and only after the economy has been strengthened would the pride and honour of the Malays be more meaningful."

Abdullah, who is also Finance Minister, said Malays must change their mindset and attitude to raise themselves to a higher level.

"This can only be done when Malays adopt the approach of helping other Malays such as the rich helping the poor."

He said Gabem's priority now is



Abdullah at an exhibition of oil palm by-products during his visit to the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry in Putrajaya yesterday. Behind him is Minister Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid.

to carry out plans under the Ninth Malaysia Plan.

He added that human capital was also an important aspect in developing successful Malay businessmen and this effort should start in schools and institutions of higher learning.

"Government-linked companies should also assist in helping the Malays such as Petronas in the east coast, Khazanah Nasional in Johor and other federal agencies

in Sabah and Sarawak."

Some of the plans in the pipeline include the formation of a Secretariat on Global Muslim Business and Skim Jejak Jaya ke Bursa Malaysia.

A non-governmental and non-profit organisation, Gabem's role is to give Malays a wake-up call on current economic issues which affect them directly, and appoint Malay captains of industry to give inputs to the Government.