

PM calls for reports on economic impact



Abdullah trying his hand at vegetable farming during his visit to the Selangor Vege Park in Hulu Yam Baru yesterday. — NST picture by Salim Shaari

• By M. K. Megan
megan@nst.com.my

KUALA SELANGOR: Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has instructed State Governments to draw up reports on the economic impact their projects will have on the people.

The usual practice of gauging the success of a project based on the amount of money spent was not enough, he said.

"We know we spend money on projects, but we do not know how they benefit the nation's economy and the local people. We want a detailed picture," the Prime Minister told reporters after visiting several

agriculture projects in Selangor yesterday.

He said State Governments should start preparing these reports immediately.

Abdullah cited as an example the large sums of money spent on housing projects, only to have some of them abandoned or left unoccupied by the house buyers.

"Such projects are failures because no impact report was prepared before embarking on them," he said.

Among the projects he visited were the Selangor Vege Park in Hulu Yam Baru, a freshwater fish farm and herbarium in Bukit Tinggi, the Feedlot Centre and a

cattle, goat, worms and composite fertiliser farm in Kuala Selangor.

He also stopped over at the Universiti Industri Selangor in Batang Berjuntai, where he was greeted by hundreds of cheering undergraduates.

Abdullah said he had been told by Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo that these projects were profitable.

"However, I have asked him for a detailed breakdown of the price of the end products, the cost of production and the profits derived.

"I want to know how much the people involved in the projects are getting compared with their earnings before their participation."

On infrastructural and housing development, the Prime Minister said he had instructed the departments involved to assume a supervisory role instead of leaving the task to the state Public Works Department.

"They should monitor and co-ordinate, and look but for tell-tale signs of a disaster waiting to happen so that action can be taken immediately to avert this."

Abdullah said the monitoring and co-ordination of projects was poor in Selangor, resulting in several mishaps of late.

"The duty of a department is not, just to issue licences, but also to monitor projects," he added.