

PM thanks supporters

KOTA KINABALU: The Prime Minister has thanked everyone for supporting his leadership.

"This means a support for the leadership, the programmes and projects that are to be implemented," said Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"The support is for the Ninth Malaysia Plan and our national mission of Vision 2020. We can now move as one team.

"I will also support them to work together as this benefits the people," he said of the back-

ing he had received from the Barisan Nasional and the people against the scathing attacks on his administration by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Abdullah was at a press conference after meeting senior federal and state civil servants at the end of his two-day visit to Sabah.

Dr Mahathir had on Wednesday levelled one of his harshest criticisms on Abdullah's administration, saying the Prime Minister was his second choice

to succeed him in 2003.

On a PAS claim that he would call for a general election by early next year, Abdullah said:

"What they say and claim is immaterial. We will do things our way. People want us to work, and if we keep talking about elections when are we going to work?"

During the meeting he told civil servants to work for the future of Malaysia and its people, and not focus on elections.

He said the people expected

all projects to be implemented as they had given the Barisan a huge mandate, and their expectations were high.

"People say Pak Lah should walk the talk, start implementing projects. They ask what happened to your manifesto promises," he said.

He also said that he wanted a one-stop centre to speed up the issuance of licences and permits involving multiple departments.

"There are now many depart-

ments that need to give approval or issue a licence for any one proposed project. Sometimes it involves five, six or even 10 departments.

"There was a time when hotels needed clearance from more than 70 departments.

"The best approach is to create a one-stop centre," he said.

He said the Government had introduced e-government to help reduce red tape.

"You help to facilitate and not frustrate," he said.