

Buyers need guidelines: PM

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday he wants the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry to establish guidelines for buyers of newly-built houses, including those on hill slopes.

He said this was necessary because the people must know and understand their rights as buyers of houses in newly-developed areas.

"We want the people to understand. Of course, there are laws but who wants to read the fine print?" he said.

Abdullah, who was asked his purpose of his visit to the ministry yesterday, explained that it was because there were several issues related to the environment that had to be resolved immediately.

"I want amendments to the Environmental Quality Act 1974 to be expedited. They are now with

the Attorney-Genera's Chambers, and after that I want the act to be amended fast," he said.

He said the amendments had to be expedited to resolve the problems associated with the environment that had cropped up.

Abdullah said a decision on the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) must also be expedited. "The decision on the EIA must not take too long. It has to be expedited. The ministry must assist to expedite it, not delay it," he said.

He also wanted the ministry to ensure that development of houses or industries was not carried out too close to rivers to prevent pollution.

"I also wanted the ministry to seek ways to immediately clean up polluted rivers," he said.

Abdullah also asked the ministry to step up awareness programmes on the importance of safeguarding the environment - **Bernama**