

Abdullah: I am not a one-term prime minister

KUALA LUMPUR: The words Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi chose were simple, yet the message was clear.

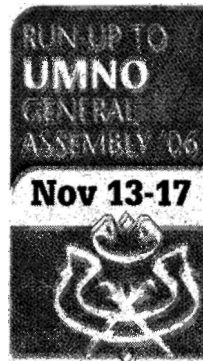
It was a matter-of-fact warning to his detractors: "I am not a one-term prime minister."

Yet, to his people, the prime minister asked for time for his policies to take root and blossom.

In an exclusive interview with *Mingguan Malaysia*, held each time the Umno general assembly takes place, Abdullah mixed both warning and appeal in one message.

"I will not run away. I am here to stay. I have long-term plans and I will ensure that these plans are implemented" he said.

But Abdullah also said he



• SEE ALSO P15 & 23

needed time to ensure the success of his present and future plans for the nation and the rakyat.

Aware that some quarters were critical of his policies, the prime minister said he would not allow plans like the Ninth Ma-

aysia Plan and Vision 2020 to go to waste.

He said such criticism came about because some professionals did not think his plans and policies would succeed, while some businessmen and contractors were worried that there would be no projects.

"They get so angry that they begin to speculate and come up with perceptions like that. In that kind of situation, I become the number one target of their anger and distrust.

"But I want to remind them that when I first took over, the construction sector was in a state of 'minus growth'. Now, just five months after the announcement of the 9MP, we have already begun several projects at various places."

After the South Johor Economic Region and the second Penang bridge project, the next to be launched would be the agro-based industry project in Sik, Kedah.

Abdullah, who is also Umno president, said he was aware that the anger and distrust would probably last awhile, and could possibly lead to "a storm" in Umno if the government did not carry out any development projects.

The prime minister took a swipe at his detractors, saying that they were the kind of people who would never bring development to the Malays. "They will criticize everything, that is the way it is for some people. This kind of 'small' mentality we can never change."