

Seeking popularity not on Abdulla's mind

PUIRAJAYA: Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has refuted that he is adopting a populist approach in making several major announcements for the benefit of the *rakyat* since becoming Prime Minister.

He said had never agreed to such an approach and it was never his intention to seek popularity.

"But if we announce something that we intend to do and the people feel good, the programme becomes popular, it's not I who will be popular," he said during a special programme *With the Prime Minister* aired by TV1 RTM last night.

In the interview that ran for almost an hour, Abdullah was asked on political developments, the economy and measures he had introduced since becoming Prime Minister on Oct 31 as well as the massive mandate obtained by the Barisan Nasional in the general election in March.

Abdullah said the large majority reflected the deep trust of the people in the Government to the extent that there

were people who wanted to see the Government implement various projects immediately.

"It's also probable there are impatient people; everyone wants to see as many things happening as quickly as possible," he said.

Abdullah said that based on the general election results, he could understand that the people were demanding and hoping for certain things.

"This actually becomes a pressure. But there are things that we can't implement quickly.

"If there is pressure, there is a good feeling, it pushes us to work. But I know that to implement all of them will take time," he said.

The Prime Minister said measures had been taken to fight, corruption, enhance, efficiency of the administration, reduce bureaucracy, build up integrity and achieve good governance.

"But what has been started today or within the next three months may not show results physically," he said.

However, he said there had been

improvements in several matters, such as reducing the backlog of cases - concerning land ownership - in the district offices.

For the police, he said, there was the setting up of the Special Commission To Enhance the Operation of the Royal Malaysia Police.

He also said that efforts were being taken to enhance agricultural development, and the standard of education throughout the country.

Abdullah said the people must be prepared to change their mindset and attitude to enable them to achieve excellence.

He was convinced that if the people had the determination to show high performance the objectives of Vision 2020 could be achieved much earlier.

"With a sense of excellence, glory and distinction imbued in the people, we will then become a more competitive race that is capable of competing with the people of other countries," he said
Bernama