

Caring and giving

Do more for the needy, PM tells big companies

BY IZATUN SHARI

BANGI: The Prime Minister has called on the corporate sector to adopt the philosophy of philanthropy and corporate citizenship to help the underprivileged.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said although individual and corporate companies had done their part to contribute towards the needy, much more should be done.

The Government is spending a lot on the welfare of the less privileged but we still need corporate companies to increase their efforts to help the needy," he said when launching the Kelab Penyayang summit conference here yesterday.

He said it was important for corporate companies to manage their resources and distribute

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part of their wealth to the poor as their social obligation.

"Their donations must be valued as positive impact on the underprivileged."

An example of a generous philanthropist is billionaire investor Warren Buffet who recently pledged to donate more than US\$30bil (RM111 bil) of his assets to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation which focuses on global health issues and education.

Abdullah also said more individuals should engage in voluntary work through organisations such as the Malaysian Red Crescent Society and Mercy Malaysia.

"You should become volunteers to help make it easier for non-governmental organisations to work."

Abdullah said the sense of caring should start from within the family in order to fulfil the Government's aspiration of creating a caring society.

"Caring begins with yourself. If everyone in your family is caring, certainly you can create a loving family. There should not be the feeling of hatred and harsh words when talking to your family members. Children should also receive support from caring parents."

Hopefully, he said the sense of caring could then be extended to the underprivileged.

"We should be caring towards others in society. We should be willing to help the needy. We should be compassionate towards the disadvantaged. These are the qualities that we should possess. I cannot imagine one who is compassionate to be defiant."

Abdullah recalled how caring his late wife Datin Paduka Seri Endon Mahmood - the founder of Yayasan Budi Penyayang Malaysia - was..

"My wife was a caring person. We taught each other to be caring. Even when she was ill, she did not want to disappoint people. She was still very active in the Penyayang programmes. She made a lot of contributions in a short period of time."

Later, Abdullah presented the Datin Paduka Seri Endon Mahmood award to Nur Alia Ahmed Ainuddin, who will be pursuing a Bachelor of Arts majoring in classical studies at the University of Edinburgh in Britain, and Shoba Janardanan who will major in carnatic music at the University of Chennai in India.

The award is given to high achievers who pursue studies in the performing arts and humanities.

Abdullah also presented Astro scholarship awards to six students - Calvin Teng Eu Choon, Bryan Foong Wai Keat, Lee Heng Kai, Siti Noor Fateha Mohamad Hanif, Dhazrani Kusairi and Soh Kwang Han.