

Steps to boost economy

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — New measures will be announced to strengthen the private sector to give the Malaysian economy a shot in the arm.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the Government would ensure there was more intensive economic growth through the creation of new investment opportunities in the private sector.

"God willing, I should be able to announce the measures to be taken to strengthen the private sector which I know has the financial capacity," he said in his 2006 New Year message broadcast over Radio Televisyen Malaysia.

"What is necessary is for us to create the opportunities for investment by the private sector in our country so that we will see more intensive economic growth and more employment opportunities."

The Prime Minister also pledged to ensure that all projects promised by the Government under Budget 2006 would be implemented successfully.

PM: We'll create new opportunities

"We must implement (the projects) with seriousness so that the desire to bring benefits, progress and success to the country is achieved."

Abdullah said the Government would also ensure the projects carried out with the private sector are undertaken successfully.

"We want those in the Government to ensure they acquire efficiency in the implementation of projects with the private sector. We also want them to work hard."

Abdullah said the Government would also enhance the country's capabilities from time to time to ensure that it can respond to crises immediately.

The country, he said, had managed to handle crises beginning with the tsunami followed by the rise in oil prices and culminating in the severe floods in the northern and east coast States of the peninsula.

These problems, he said, had challenged the Government to act immediately with the resources at its disposal.

He said the nation's readiness to face up to crises would be stepped up through the shaping of human capital that was equipped not only with knowledge but also with good moral values.

"If we possess these good qualities, God willing, we will become a truly progressive people with the capability to do anything for the future of the nation."

Abdullah said the private sector must also show creativity and innovation in handling problems.

"When we talk of rising oil prices, we must surely be prepared to change our outlook and lifestyle. We must never indulge in wastage.

"We have to strive to ensure that in using energy we ensure efficiency."

Abdullah was happy with the

success attained by the country this year, including by athletes in the international arena.

"We have seen Nicol David become the world champion in squash. She raised her game to win the world title and thus has become a sportswoman of distinction." — Bernama

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Aidiladha falls on Jan 10

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Hari Raya Aidiladha will be celebrated on Jan 10.

The office of the Keeper of the Rulers' Seal said in a statement today the date was set based on the date of 1 Zulhijjah 1426 which falls tomorrow.