

PM: Billions being lost

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KUCHING, Sun. — Lack of maintenance of government buildings and public infrastructure, coupled with vandalism, is washing billions of ringgit down the drain.

The Prime Minister is naturally upset.

“This is our glaring weakness... the weakness of the Government, public sector and the people in general for failing to make good use of the facilities provided for them,” Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

Abdullah, who is also Finance Minister, said many facilities, from large buildings to water pipes, needed major repairs because the problems had not been detected in the early stages.

He said things were made worse by the failure to act fast, resulting in losses amounting to billions of ringgit due to repairs when the damage had become severe.

“This shows we are not wise in using facilities,” he said.

“Damage will happen, and we also do not know how to repair them, and are late in repairing. Our maintenance is poor.”

To check the rot, Abdullah said,

Paying heavy price for lack of maintenance

‘A stitch in time saves nine’, so it is important to carry out regular maintenance. The cost will also be lower.’

Abdullah

he would direct the Public Works Department to prepare a guide on the early detection, repair and maintenance of government buildings and public facilities.

Abdullah was speaking to reporters after participating in a community service programme and closing a gathering of the Barisan Nasional Backbenchers’ Club 2006 at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan (Agama) Sheikh Haji Othman Abdul Wahab in Matang near here.

In his speech at the closing ceremony, Abdullah urged government servants and elected repre-

sentatives to keep watch on facilities which required regular maintenance.

This, he said, would prevent such facilities from reaching a dilapidated state.

“A stitch in time saves nine’, so it is important to carry out regular maintenance,” he said. “The cost will also be lower.”

He called on Members of Parliament and state assemblymen not to compete against each other in wanting facilities or projects in their area.

“In every parliamentary constituency, there are two or more

state assemblymen, and they should enhance co-ordination and work as a team to achieve greater development in that particular constituency,” Abdullah said.

“This co-operation and co-ordination is vital as it will lead to smoother implementation of programmes.

“We don’t want wasteful competition. At times there are similar projects in a single parliamentary constituency due to a lack of co-ordination. This is a waste as the people in another area could benefit from the same project.”

He said elected representatives should adopt a “teamwork culture” to face increasing demands from the people.

“We can render better service to our respective constituencies by moving as one team,” said Abdullah, who is also BN chairman.

Earlier, Abdullah led the BNBBC’s community service programme at the religious school, joined by Sarawak state assemblymen.

The elected representatives followed Abdullah and Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri George Chan in a host of gotong-royong activities, including repainting the school’s surau and cleaning the garden.