

PM to teachers: I'll help you

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KUALA LUMPUR: "Carry out your responsibilities sincerely and I will help you."

That was the plea and assurance from Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to more than 300,000 teachers who celebrated Teachers Day yesterday.

The Prime Minister said the Government was always looking for ways and means to reward teachers, whom he described as the people who moulded the future of the nation.

"There is no denying your role in the future of this beloved country, which is even more

demanding nowadays," he said when launching the National Teacher's Day celebration at Putra World Trade Centre here.

"Now, I am taking this opportunity to ask you to teach our children to the best of your ability and carry out your responsibilities sincerely, and I will help you however I can."

Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and Federal Territory Minister Datuk Zulhasnan Rafique were also present.

Abdullah, who spoke for nearly an hour on his hopes and the role of the teachers, said the help he could immediately think of was giving priority to

providing them with a conducive working environment.

He said the fact that the Education Ministry received among the biggest allocations in the Ninth Malaysia Plan showed how the Government was helping the teachers.

Under the five-year plan, the ministry was allocated RM23.108bil to build more schools and better quarters for teachers.

Abdullah also told teachers to always strive to widen their knowledge as part of efforts to produce Malaysians who were knowledgeable, personable, capable and competitive.

"You are at the forefront in

the implementation of various national education agendas and as such play a vital role in producing the best human capital.

"We hope (to make) our children better, hence, teachers have to be much better. It is, therefore, my sincere hope that you can carry out your duties with dedication in developing the human capital," he said.

He added that efforts to produce a developed and competitive race should start from an early stage as one's strength and resilience must be moulded from young, and this was where teachers came into play.

On the issue of some 3,000 newly graduated teachers who

could not be placed in schools, as their areas of specialisation were not needed at the moment, he said the Education Ministry was looking into the matter.

"I am sure there will be a solution because it is important to ensure that the graduates are not left idle," he said.

"Let me hear first the ministry's plans and if they are workable, there should not be any problem approving them."

Abdullah later presented the National Teacher Awards 2006 to Datuk Borhan Mohamed Yaman (retired teacher and former education supervisor of adult education in Malacca who has been actively producing

Malay poems), Prof Hussein Ahmad (former Institut Aminuddin Baki director and currently professor of the Institute of Principal Studies, Kota Campus in Universiti Malaya) and Azizah Mohamed Taib (former supervisor of Perlis schools and now a successful businesswoman).

Educationist Prof Emeritus Tan Sri Awang Had Salleh was honoured with the Leadership Award, the highest honour in the celebration, to recognise and appreciate his enormous contribution to the development of education in the country.

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