



Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (second from left) and Datin Seri Jeanne Abdullah (centre) looking at a model of a mini greenhouse after the launch of the National Environment Awareness Campaign 2007 at the Jom Heboh carnival site in Bayan Baru, Penang, yesterday. With them are Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid (left) and his wife Datin Seri Normala Samsudin. — NST picture by Fariz Iswadi Ismail

Abdullah takes dirty Malaysians to task

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GEORGE TOWN: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi yesterday slammed those who continued to pollute the environment by disposing of rubbish indiscriminately.

He said filthy habits had caused most states in the country to become dirty and ugly while rivers were badly polluted.

At the launch of the National Environment Awareness Campaign 2007 here, Abdullah also took to task developers who were bent on cutting every tree to construct as many houses as possible at their project sites.

Such practices, he said, not only created unsightly residential areas but also contributed to rising temperatures and flash floods.

"We can see rubbish every-

where in most places.

"People are throwing rubbish next to their houses, along the roads and into the rivers.

"If this continues, the country will soon become dirty and ugly.

"Eventually it is the people who will suffer."

Abdullah cited the situation in Penang as an example and said the island was once known as the "Pearl of the Orient" because of its natural beauty.

He said it should have been everyone's responsibility to take care of the island's cleanliness and preserve its beauty.

"However, what we are seeing today is completely the reverse. The rivers here are dead, the beaches polluted and waterfalls which were once excellent are all gone.

"This is not only happening in Penang but also in other states."

Abdullah said everyone should play a role in maintaining the environment and called on the people to start fulfilling this responsibility.

He said the tourism industry, which contributed billions of ringgit to the country's economy, would suffer if the level of cleanliness continued to deteriorate.

Abdullah said people should start avoiding dirty places and stop buying houses in areas without greenery.

"The people can force retailers and developers to ensure they also maintain the environment."

Also present at the launch at the Jom Heboh carnival site in Bayan Baru here were Abdullah's wife Datin Seri Jeanne Abdullah, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon and Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid.

At a press conference later, Abdullah was asked to comment on the controversy surrounding CTOS Sdn Bhd, which was charged in court last week for various irregularities.

The prime minister said any company that breached the law would be charged by the authorities.

"If they have breached the rules, then they just have to face action."

To another question on the dossier handed to his office by former Parti Keadilan Rakyat stalwart Ezam Mohd Noor alleging corruption against a minister, Abdullah said he would look into the matter.

Ezam handed the 632-page report to the Prime Minister's Office on June 29 to support the allegations of corruption and criminal breach of trust.