

Keep the momentum going, civil servants told

■ **By Deborah Loh**
news@nst.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: The government has created the momentum for a strong economy and now civil servants must ensure that this is sustained, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

He was confident this momentum could be speeded up, barring unforeseen circumstances like natural disasters or global conflicts.

Abdullah, who was speaking at the Finance Ministry's monthly gathering, said even critics of the government could see this change.

"So far, we have done well and practised good stewardship of our funds.

"We have spent where it was needed, and we have managed to reduce the budget deficit. Many

sectors are enjoying this as a result."

Abdullah, who is also the Finance Minister, reminded the staff of the ministry that as the agency responsible for allocating and disbursing funds and vetting projects, they had a major role to play in shaping economic policies.

However, it had to co-operate closely with other key federal agencies.

"The MoF is not the only one making decisions. We acknowledge the roles and responsibilities of other key agencies. All must keep up the momentum and dynamism to spur the economy further."

The private sector too had a role in complementing government efforts to keep up this momentum, he said.

"There are still imperfections, weaknesses, that must be ad-

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dressed. And there will be challenges and possibilities we can't foresee. We must be able to react quickly with the right measures and take advantage of every good wind that blows our way to strengthen the economy."

Abdullah welcomed new Treasury secretary-general Datuk Dr Wan Abdul Aziz Wan Abdullah, who succeeds Datuk Seri Izzuddin Dali, who has retired.

The prime minister thanked Izzuddin for his services and professionalism. He said staff should support Wan Abdul Aziz in his new role, through dialogue and sharing of ideas.

"That is how we must be in the civil service — speak frankly, present our ideas clearly."

Wan Abdul Aziz had served six years in the Treasury and was deputy secretary-general prior to his new appointment.

