

Opportunity for all

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ABDULLAH LAUNCHES EDUCATION MASTER PLAN

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PUTRAJAYA: The government is responsible for ensuring that every child, including those in the rural areas, enjoys equal opportunity to education in school, at least at the minimum level.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said this was the main purpose of the Education Development Master

Plan 2006-2010, which detailed the steps to bring about major changes in the education system.

"The measures will be implemented to ensure the quality of infrastructure in our schools, including in rural and remote areas, is improved. We must increase the facilities, especially in Sabah and Sarawak, so that our children are provided with quality education," he told reporters after launching the master plan yesterday.

"If this is not done, it would be a negligence of duties and responsibilities and can also be seen as an unfair action as we have failed to provide the same quality of education for all, at least at the minimum level."

Abdullah said the Education Ministry must ensure there were adequate facilities and qualified teachers in the schools.

According to the master plan:
» 10.1% (767) of the primary schools and 1.4% (28) secondary

schools still do not have 24-hour electricity supply.

» 20% (1,517) of the primary schools and 3.4% (68) secondary schools still do not have clean water supply.

» Because of the shortage of classrooms, 0.7% (68) of the primary schools are still using the facilities of other schools, and

» 11.3% (858) of the primary schools and 36.9% (748) secondary schools still have two sessions daily.

Abdullah said human capital development must begin at school and the education system must ensure the children were trained to be literate as well as sharp.

He said the six thrusts of the master plan must be carried out accordingly to make sure the national school was a popular choice among Malaysians.