

Great strides made to curb poverty, says PM

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KUALA LUMPUR: The country's efforts to combat poverty have been acknowledged by the United Nations as one of the most successful of its kind in the world, said Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

However, even with such achievements, there were still people in the country that needed assistance, said the Prime Minister.

"There are still parts of the country that have not fully benefited from the

strong economic growth, just like there are parts of our society that still require a helping hand," he said.

In this context, he noted that while the main responsibility to improve the people's welfare rested with the Government, others had played a role in complementing the Government's efforts.

"The fact there are people willing to help their fellow citizens is proof of the generosity that underpins

Malaysian society," he said at the New Straits Times Press-PricewaterhouseCoopers Malaysian Humanitarian Award at a hotel here yesterday.

Abdullah also said the country has been successful in combating poverty because it has enjoyed continuous political stability for five decades.

Stability, he noted, had allowed the Government to develop the country in a sustained way.

"But we must not take this blessing for granted but must constantly work at preserving it."

The Prime Minister commended charitable organisations in the country for not merely giving out aid but working to empower the have-nots.

"While we applaud the noble acts of giving aid to those in need, I firmly believe that the capacity-building aspect of humanitarian work is equally important," he added.