

# Value nation's peace and stability, says Abdullah

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has expressed his happiness and gratitude that the country had continued to enjoy good economic growth, peace and stability in the past year.

In his Hari Raya message to the nation, Abdullah said Malaysians were most fortunate in having been blessed with many good things not only in the last year but since attaining independence 50 years ago.

"No one had expected that a weak and backward country, after being colonised for many years, could emerge as one of the most progressive among the developing countries within only 50 years.

"This has been possible due to the wisdom of the country's leadership as well as the solidarity of

the people in ensuring that the country continued to progress," he said.

Abdullah said Muslims in this country should be thankful that they could observe the fasting month in peace and without the calamities experienced by several other Muslim countries.

"For example, Indonesia has experienced earthquakes while several countries in West Asia and Afghanistan face conflicts and wars which have brought hardship to the people, especially the Muslims who have to observe the fasting month under difficult circumstances.

"Thus, we should be thankful to Allah and, in the spirit of Aidilfitri, let us show our gratitude by offering assistance to the less fortunate, whether in Malaysia or else-

where," he said.

Abdullah called on the people to unite in doing whatever they could to bring cheer to the less fortunate so that they too could enjoy Aidilfitri.

Reminding the people of the floods that hit the southern parts of peninsular Malaysia during Aidilfitri last year, he said the assistance and co-operation rendered by the people had helped the victims to recover from the tragedy and they could enjoy Aidilfitri in a happier atmosphere this year.

He also thanked the corporate sector for their generous contributions to the needy.

Abdullah also urged the people to forge closer ties and seek forgiveness in the spirit of Aidilfitri.

"Aidilfitri is the best time for us

to be with our loved ones.

"The family means a lot to us and probably for those who have lost their beloved family members, like I have, they would appreciate the family more," he said.

"Children must appreciate their parents, who have sacrificed a lot for them, and shower them with love and bring them happiness while they can.

He reminded the balik kampung crowd to be careful on the road.

Meanwhile, Abdullah's wife, Datin Seri Jeanne Abdullah, said the people should utilise the Aidilfitri break to renew family bonds.

"I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Muslims Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri," she said. — Bernama