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Offer ideas to Pemudah, PM urges state govts

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KUCHING: State governments have been urged to forward suggestions and ideas to the Special Task Force to Facilitate Business, or Pemudah, as part of their contribution to improving the government delivery system.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said chief ministers and menteri besar were encouraged to submit proposals to Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan.

"Pemudah is not intended to confine its activities at the federal level. The rationale behind the setting up of the task force is to enhance our delivery system and every state must be a part of this.

"If there are better and more efficient procedures or mechanisms to enhance our service, then I welcome such ideas and constructive feedback. We are open to suggestions on how best to solve problems on the ground."

The prime minister was speaking after laying the foundation stone for the new RM100 million Sarawak Islamic Council Complex here.

Abdullah said he had informed all chief ministers and menteri besar on the need for a fruitful two-way working relationship with Pemudah to ensure quick results.

Pemudah was established last February, comprising 23 notable individuals from the private and public sectors, to cut red tape and speed up bureaucratic processes dealing with business. It is co-chaired by Sidek and the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers president Tan Sri Yong Poh Kon.

Earlier in his speech at the function, Abdullah urged Muslims to enhance their knowledge and abide by the teachings of Islam to prevent them from becoming a liability to others.

He also assured the non-Malays and non-Muslims that the Barisan Nasional government was a government for all and not for any particular group or organisation.

Earlier, Abdullah said Sarawak's phenomenal growth since becoming a partner in Malaysia 44 years ago was due to the BN government's vision and hard work.

He said as the largest state in the country, Sarawak faced great challenges in raising the living



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standards of its people.

"Today, Sarawak is standing tall. The BN government's aspiration of enhancing the people's quality of life is evident through the many aspects of development we are enjoying today.

"The demand has increased and I believe the government has to respond very quickly. At times, the pressure on the government is very high but I'm sure we in the BN can deliver what we promise."

Speaking at the opening of the Kenyalang Interchange near the Kuching International Airport, he urged the people to embrace human capital development with as much determination as other forms of physical development.

"Our people are our greatest asset and they must be developed with a better quality of education and training at all levels of society. Knowledge is not confined to the higher learning institutions or universities.

"We must strive to improve our rakyat in every possible facet of life so that we can hold our heads high in any given field or vocation. We can achieve high human capital standards if we set our hearts and minds to it."

The Kenyalang Interchange, built by Global Upline Sdn Bhd, was completed 10 months ahead of the original schedule of 18 months.

Abdullah said the construction company's ability to complete projects ahead of time while maintaining costs and quality of work was a clear example of how locals could fly high if they worked for it.

He said the construction industry had an important role in the

country's development and urged firms to constantly improve themselves.

"Sarawak's construction industry is of good stature and what is happening now can only bring about greater benefits to the people.

"The development of a regional corridor here would require both the public and private sectors to work as a team to realise our goals. Such co-operation is also vital in the tourism industry which is a good revenue earner."

During the function, Abdullah also performed the groundbreaking for the construction of Global Upline's 12-storey hotel adjacent to Kuching International Airport.

The 360-room Four Points by Sheraton Kuching is expected to serve as an airport hotel for travellers.

Abdullah also witnessed the signing of the management agreement between Global Upline and Starwood Asia Pacific Hotels & Resorts Pte Ltd.

Starwood's portfolio of hotel brands includes the Sheraton, Four Points By Sheraton, Westin, St Regis, W Hotels, Le Meridien, Element and Alof.