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Abdullah: Understand needs of our youth

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PUTRAJAYA: Leaders and government officers must try to understand what the youth need in order to provide them with skills that could pave the way for them to succeed, the prime minister said.

Adjustments must be made to youth programmes so that benefits could be reaped, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

“Don’t just think of problems plaguing the youth. I want them to have new hopes. Today, the situa-

tion is different and it requires us, as leaders, to be innovative and creative so that we can provide our youth with multiple skills.

“Leaders must have the skills to lead. So, the plans we have for the youth must develop and nurture them to become successful on their own.”

Abdullah was speaking after handing over appointment letters to chairmen of youth development committees for Selangor at a hotel near here.

He said the emphasis should be on providing programmes that could challenge the youth’s minds and encourage them to go into

business. “If our youth are successful in businesses and become employers, it will lead to spin-offs in terms of job opportunities for other people.”

Present were Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo and Selangor executive council members.

Abdullah also said many Malaysian youth with multiple skills had gone overseas as they were in high demand.

“Many have gone to Singapore, Japan and the Middle East and they are paid thousands of ringgit in salary.

“Skills are, indeed, an asset. I

want our youth who are skilful to be dynamic and committed in enhancing the growth of various sectors in the country.

“Right now, although agricultural methods have been modernised, they are still not that attractive to our youth who are more interested in working in factories.”

Abdullah cited an agro-based project in Terengganu which had succeeded in attracting a large number of graduates.

The involvement of youth in agro-based industries would result in more new growth centres in rural areas.