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'Let Awang lead Kelantan'

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BACHOK: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the Barisan Nasional could get the support of the people to win Kelantan and had prepared for the outcome by naming a menteri besar.

Abdullah said Datuk Dr Awang Adek Hussin was chosen to head the state government if the BN won the election as he was educated, experienced, capable and accepted by Kelantan Umno.

"In the last election, we did not name anybody but the people guessed, based on who was then the state Umno liaison chairman.

"This time, we named him early so that the people can know the future plans for Kelantan from Awang Adek himself," he said.

The prime minister was speaking after attending a groundbreaking ceremony for the Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) permanent campus in Tangok here yesterday.

"I believe the people of Kelantan want change but they also want to be certain the new government can bear the responsibilities."

Abdullah said the federal government was bringing in a great deal of development to Kelantan and it would be preferable if the same party administered the state.

"We have big plans for the state, including the East Coast Economic Corridor (ECER).

"So the best way is to have the same government at both the federal and state levels," he said.

Abdullah said it was wrong of Pas to say that it would let the federal government develop Kelantan while it ruled the state.

"If they do not want to bring development, then what do they want to do? Just take their pay? It should not be like that.

"This is what Pas has been say-



Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi says if Pas does not want to bring development to Kelantan, it should let BN do it.

ing. If they do not want to do anything, then let the BN do it," he said.

On allegations of disunity in Kelantan Umno, Abdullah said Pas would always try to cause confusion in the Umno ranks so as to put off potential supporters.

Asked about complaints that

Umno candidates were arrogant, he said they must change and he would tell them to be humble.

On Pas' claim that the BN was trying hard to capture Kelantan because of the state's supposed oil and gas reserves, Abdullah said it was just talk and nothing had been confirmed.

Earlier in his speech, Abdullah said the people of Kelantan would see development they had never seen before if the BN won the election.

Speaking to some 10,000 people at the ceremony, Abdullah said the time had come to accelerate development in the state.

"Kelantan has huge potential waiting to be tapped and utilised productively to generate progress for the people," he said.

Also present were Datin Paduka Seri Jeanne Abdullah, BN and Umno liaison chief Datuk Seri Annuar Musa, Higher Education Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed, UMK chairman Tan Sri Kama Hamad Piah and vice-chancellor Prof Dr Zainai Mohamed.

About 310 hectares have been set aside for the main UMK campus, involving a budget of RM205 million.

UMK is the country's 19th public university.

At a dinner with educationists later, Abdullah said Pas leaders were poisoning the minds of the Kelantan people by claiming that development would bring social problems.

He also presented appointment letters to 120 graduates who will work as price monitors under the National Price Council at a salary of RM1,500 a month. — **By Alina Simon, Ridwan Abdullah, Sulaiman Jaafar and Mazlinda Mahmood**