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PM shocked by Pas' 'no-progress' stand

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KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi expressed shock that the Pas government does not want development in Kelantan.

He said he had heard that the Islamic party did not want development for fear of the high cost of living in the state.

"I am surprised. It is as if they do not want development," he said at a meet-the-people session at Stadium Juara Bukit Kiara last night. The audience comprised people from Kelantan who were

living in the city.

Abdullah said he could not accept such reasoning from an Islamic party and the people of Kelantan should reject such a government.

He said cost of living was low before but most Malaysians did not have water, electricity, cars and other facilities.

"Now most Muslims can do the haj. People have cars and enjoy other facilities. Prices have gone higher because quality of life has improved but we are managing the country well," he said.

He added that the opposition had attacked the Barisan Nasional continuously and refused to accept a hand to improve the people's lives, especially in Kelantan.

Even so, the prime minister who is also BN chairman, said BN had not punished the Kelantan people for choosing the opposition to lead them, and had included them in the East Coast Economic Region development plan.

Meanwhile in **Kuala Terengganu**, Abdullah said the opposition envied the

Barisan Nasional's ability to deliver, which had caused it to belittle development as bad for the people.

"I am baffled by such a mindset. It doesn't make sense," he told a large crowd in the Batu Buruk recreational park here.

"Such a mindset will only harm the people, the (Malay) race and the country."

Present were Datin Paduka Seri Jeanne Abdullah, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh and party leaders as well as candidates for the election.

Earlier, Abdullah responded to some of the criticisms levelled against the Islamic Civilisation Park here.

In many Pas ceramah, speaker after speaker claimed that the Crystal Mosque was not built for Friday prayers but was only a gimmick.

"The project has boosted the tourism industry as it draws more visitors to Terengganu.

"It also provides jobs for locals and craftsmen who can showcase their talents." — **By Azura Abas, Sean Augustin and Minderjeet Kaur**