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PM: Govt looking out for rakyat

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BUTTERWORTH: The government always looks for ways to ease the burden of the people, especially when there is a rise in the price of essential goods, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

Urging the people to spend wisely, he said the increase in prices, particularly the fuel price hike, was beyond the government's control.

"Do not waste. We have to be prudent so we don't suffer later."

Abdullah said this at a function to hand over keys to residents of the Ampang Jajar low-cost flats here.

The 760-unit flats, constructed by Wilayah Utara, were built under the state government's People's Housing Project.

Construction started in 2004 and was completed last month.

The units are being rented out to the hardcore poor from the Mak Mandin area

for RM100 a month for five years.

Abdullah said people should not be taken in by the opposition which claimed the government had done nothing to prevent the cost of fuel from rising.

"It is easy for them to say this and that. However, it is not easy for us to do something which is beyond our control."

He said the government was aware of the hardship faced by the people and had helped them out in many ways.

"For instance, we have been providing subsidies for children's education, diesel for fishermen and fertilisers for farmers."

To reduce the cost of constructing low-cost houses, he said the cabinet had, at a recent meeting, approved the use of the industrialised building system, where building materials could be bought at low prices from factories.

"This will enable developers to build more houses at lower cost."

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said the state government maintained a policy requiring developers to build low- and medium-cost houses.

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