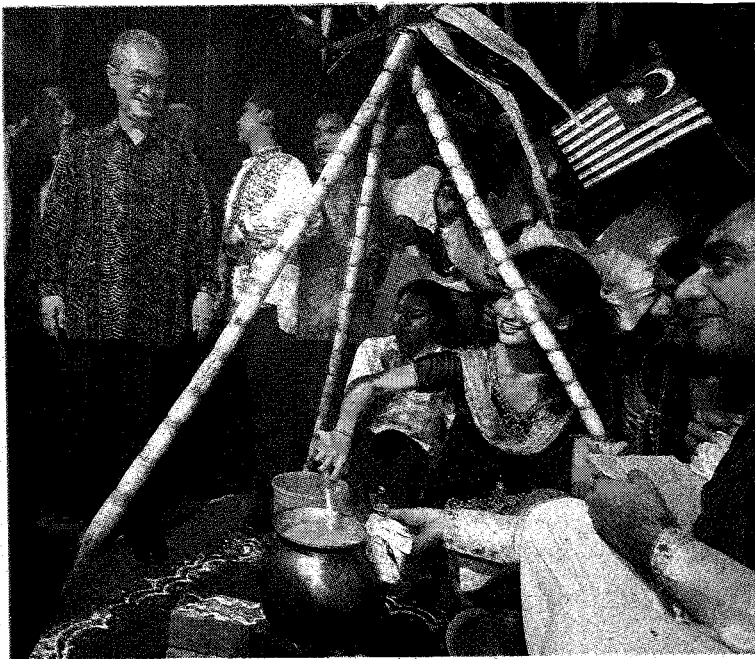


DATE: 20/1/2008



Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi looks on as rice with milk is cooked in celebration of the Ponggal festival at Jalan Masjid India yesterday. — Bernama picture

Abdullah to consider Thaipusam holiday

N57- 20/1/2008

KUALA LUMPUR: The government will consider a request by the Hindu community to declare Thaipusam a national holiday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

Currently, it is a holiday in Selangor, Perak, Negri Sembilan,

Johor and Penang.

"I promise I will consider this," Abdullah told the crowd at a function in Jalan Masjid India to celebrate Ponggal (harvest festival).

Earlier, local poet Uthaya Sankar S.B. delivered a *pantun* ending with a request to Abdul-

lah to consider making Thaipusam a national holiday.

Also present were Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Zulkhasnan Rafique, MCA Bukit Bintang chairman Datuk Dr Lee Chong Meng and MIC Bukit Bintang chairman Datuk V.K.K. Teagarajan.