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Graduates don T-shirts promoting unity at the launch of Yayasan Budi Penyayang's unity gathering by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (right) in Putrajaya yesterday.
— NST pictures by David Khoo

PM: Work towards ensuring unity

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PUTRAJAYA: Unity should not remain merely another slogan. Instead, all Malaysians must work towards maintaining prevailing unity, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

Speaking before 4,000 university graduates at the annual "unity gathering of graduates" organised by Yayasan Budi Penyayang, the prime minister said the various races must always co-operate, and be tolerant and understanding, to ensure unity as this was the only way for Malaysia to achieve the objectives of the National Mission and Vision 2020.

"Despite the problems we have, we are still a united nation and we respect and can co-operate with one another. We must show that we can continue to work together.

"This country can be further developed with the strengths of all

the races — not just a single race." Abdullah said independence and sovereignty would be meaningless if Malaysians fought each other and created problems for the country.

Malaysians, he said, should be grateful for the achievements and the peace and stability the country had been blessed with.

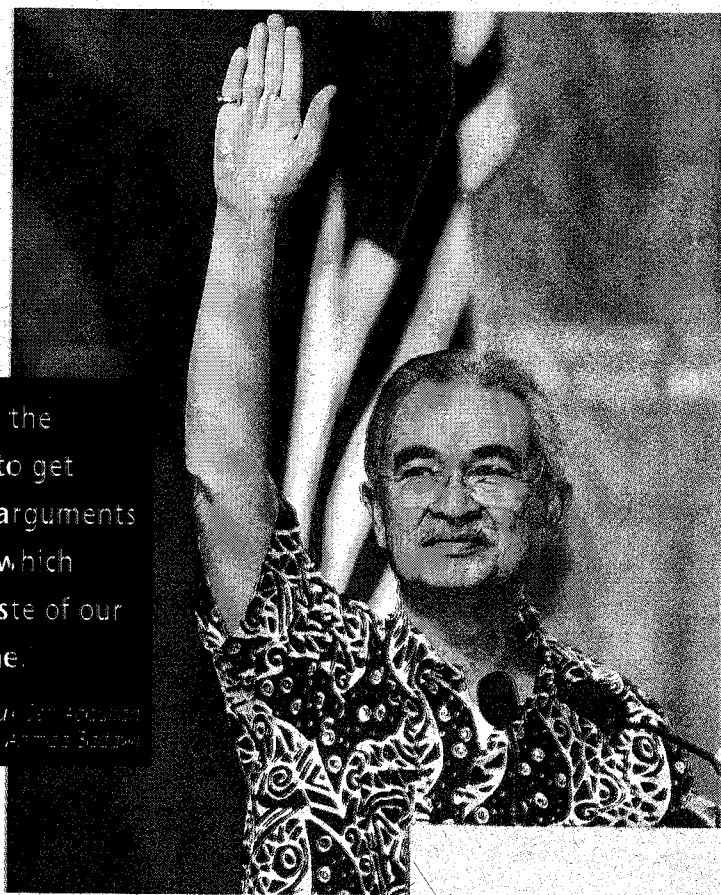
He said the government was never short of ideas to bring progress to the people and would continue with its efforts to reduce the disparity among the haves and have-nots, and hoped the implementing agencies would be quick and efficient in implementing the policies and programmes.

"If all these are with us, we will become more successful. We must add value to ourselves and acquire as much knowledge as possible."

He said Vision 2020 was an important milestone and there was a need to focus on producing a quality and knowledgeable workforce.

“ I urge the people not to get involved in arguments or conflicts which will be a waste of our valuable time.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi



"We are on the right track for development. We are also respected all over the world for being a united nation. We definitely do not want to fall from this positive track that we are going in.

"I urge the people not to get involved in arguments or conflicts which will be a waste of our valuable time."

Abdullah said people should not fear the challenges brought about by globalisation, but to face them with confidence.

"We can't run away from this and if we are competing, we must make sure that we succeed. We also should not remain efficient users of technologies but must become the creators of such technology."

Also present were his daughter,

Nori Abdullah, who is also Yayasan Budi Penyayang chairman, Higher Education Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed and the foundation's chief executive officer, Datuk Lela Mohd Ali.

Nori said the foundation would continue to assist those in need.

"We also hope to be able to help the government achieve Vision 2020 and promote its human capital development programmes. Unity programmes for all races would continue to be held."

She also expressed hope that the graduates would benefit from the programmes.

Mustapa called on the students to play their roles to ensure that the human capital development programme as envisioned by Abdullah is achieved.