

PM asks for fresh mandate

Abdullah: It will take time for programmes to show results

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KUALA LUMPUR: Give me more time to deliver what I have promised, said Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

In asking the people for a fresh mandate, the Prime Minister said his Government was just in the process of implementing almost all the programmes it promised.

The programmes would take years to show results, he said.

"These are things that are not easy and take time to accomplish," he said, adding that the programmes were not only confined to five-year plans in the 9th Malaysia Plan.

They included development programmes, vision plans and national economic policies that took as long as 30 years, he said.

"We never focused on a five-year plan and later think of others. We have to plan beyond that.

"Some development and vision plans overlap and some need a long time to produce results," he told reporters after a briefing for 3,000 Umno division members at the Putra World Trade Centre.

On whether Barisan would receive the same overwhelming mandate as in the 2004 election, he said he did not think so.



My plan: Abdullah gesturing to reporters during a press conference after a briefing for Umno members at the PWTC in Kuala Lumpur yesterday as Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak looks on.

"If I get it, I will be very happy. But I am being very, very practical," he said, adding that the 2004 result was overwhelming because of the leadership change when he replaced Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"It was then a time of hope. There was expectation that a lot of things would change, but we cannot change, I cannot change everything.

"There was expectation that this or that has to be done. It's not that

we haven't done anything. I have begun to implement practically everything that I have promised," he added.

In the briefing, Abdullah touched on current issues such as price increases of consumer goods and petrol, security and poverty eradication efforts as well as party matters.

On a possible election date, he said Parliament could be dissolved "in the near future, much later or a

little later."

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir predicted a substantial win for Barisan but avoided speculating when the polls would be held.

"When I was the prime minister, I would always have the election when I believed I could win.

"If you want to know when the election will be held, look and think... if the Government feels they can win, then that's the time they will have it," he said after the opening of The Loaf bakery cum restaurant at the Pavilion shopping complex.

"Everything is going up, the price of things and the stock market. Even from not having a Pavilion, now we have a Pavilion."

A reporter then said that even the price of bread was going up to which Dr Mahathir agreed and added that the price of *roti canai* had increased.

Dr Mahathir is chairman of M and M Consolidated Resources Sdn Bhd which owns The Loaf.

Dr Mahathir, who described the present situation as "ideal" for holding polls, said:

"Barisan will surely win. As to the percentage, I don't know. But I think it will be a substantial victory," he said.

Dr Mahathir also commented on issues in the Middle East. Asked what Malaysia as the OIC chair could do, he said: "I have no opinion on this, I'm just a bread seller."