

Work harder to keep up with the big guys, says PM

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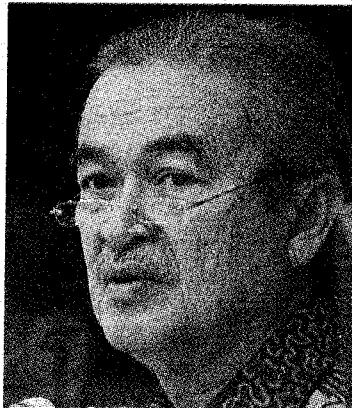
PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia's improvement in world competitiveness is the result of its strong economic performance, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

He cautioned, however, that the country should not be complacent and instead work harder to be at par with the competitiveness of economic powerhouses such as Japan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan.

The World Competitiveness Yearbook 2006 has Malaysia moving up from 28th place last year to 23rd this year among 60 countries in the competitiveness ladder.

It scored higher marks than countries such as India, South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines.

The yearbook is published by the Institute of Management Develop-



Abdullah promised all would enjoy the benefits of growth

ment in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The Prime Minister said the Government would ensure that benefits from the growth in economy were enjoyed by all levels of society.

It would also continue to reduce

the financial burden and cost of living of the people following the fuel price hike.

Abdullah was speaking at the 2007 Budget Consultation Council meeting on the theme "Leveraging Diversity and Endowments for Quality Growth".

This is the Finance Ministry's annual event to gather views from the private sector, the people and government agencies in preparing the Budget.

Next year's Budget will be tabled in Parliament on Sept 1.

Among those present at yesterday's meeting were Finance Minister II Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop and Deputy Finance Ministers Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen and Datuk Dr Awang Adek Hussin.

Abdullah, who is also the Finance Minister, said the economy was expected to remain robust and expand at six per cent this year.

"We must be prepared to make

changes and adopt creative and innovative approaches. We must move towards practising a culture with first-class mentality," he said.

Abdullah said government policies and strategies must not only focus on the people today but also the future generation.

"The development we are after should be achieved without giving so much burden and responsibility to the future generation."

Efforts to enhance the public service delivery system would continue to be intensified.

He said government officers were crucial in ensuring the smooth implementation of projects, stressing that their role was not to frustrate but to facilitate.

"To ease, not to burden, to simplify, not to complicate. We know delay or failure in implementing a project may be due to corruption. This must be eliminated as it is against our values and ethics."