

PM: I won't be distracted

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KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has reiterated his responsibility to the people who gave him the mandate to run the country.

"The people have given us a big mandate during the last elections and we must work hard to fulfil it," he said.

He said that he was determined to keep his mind focused and called on Malaysians not to be distracted with the recent criticisms and allegations (against his administration) to the extent that the priority to develop the country was forgotten.

"My first responsibility, besides Allah, is to the people who supported me. I will give my full attention and work with all my heart and soul and not get distracted.

"We must maximise the limited time we have, to succeed and not be misled by whatever that can divert our attention elsewhere from our goals," he said in his speech at the Senators Club Malaysia dinner last night.

To questions by some on what was coming next after the TV3 interview, Abdullah said it was to continue to stay focused and get things done.

He said they needed to do what was best to realise the people's ambition so that the country could continue to develop and the nation could achieve Vision 2020.



WARM SUPPORT: Abdullah greeting Senator Datuk Dr Lee Chong Meng (right) during the Senators Club Malaysia dinner in Kuala Lumpur last night.

"Some have asked me why I don't have my own Vision. For me, Vision 2020 is enough as it is aimed to develop the country but we must work hard to achieve this goal. "It is also important to add value to ourselves by increasing knowledge, moral values and inner

strength," he added.

He said the five thrusts under the 9th Malaysia Plan would help ensure the people enjoy development but stressed on the importance of implementing these projects and for all to work together to achieve the goal.

"Even during difficulties, keep our minds focused and ensure the gap between the wealthy and the poor, between the urban and rural areas and between the agricultural and industrial sector is reduced."

Abdullah thanked the senators for their support and announced that their development allocation would be increased from RM150,000 per three-year term to RM200,000 for the same period.

Meanwhile, the Senators present reiterated their support for Abdullah and the present Government, with Senators Club president Datuk Abdul Rahman Suliman encouraging Abdullah to continue with his mission.

"Don't be bothered about the accusations and slander as it comes from people's bad desires in their minds," said Suliman, who also asked whether the senators' tenure could be extended for more than two terms.

Dewan Negara president Tan Sri Dr Abdul Hamid Pawanteh in his speech encouraged Abdullah to keep the faith and stay on course.