

SPDP: Lead rural folk to growth

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KUCHING: People in rural areas must not be left to indulge in self-pity and efforts must be made to lead them to the mainstream of development, Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP) president Datuk William Mawan told his party members.

"They must be helped to face the new world bravely," he said at the opening of the party's general assembly at Holiday Inn Resort Damai Lagoon, near here, yesterday.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi opened the two-day gathering.

Mawan, who is state Social Development and Urbanisation Minister, called on members of the Dayak-based SPDP to help rural folks acquire knowledge, information and communication technology skills and the enterprising spirit to improve their livelihood.

"Capacity building will be greater in rural areas, where the process must begin with changing the people's mentality so that they are willing to step out of traditional moulds.

"The party's grassroots leaders have to play multiple roles as educators, motivators and agents of change to prepare rural bumiputras to cope with the challenges and opportunities that come with the modernisation of the agricultural sector," he said.

On the Ninth Malaysia Plan, Mawan said that SPDP was committed to work closely with its Barisan Nasional coalition partners to ensure all socio-economic programmes are smoothly carried out.

He added that the allocation of RM15bil to Sarawak was proof of Abdullah's commitment to speed up the state's development.