

'BN must rise above race to shape nation's future'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Barisan National component parties should transcend communal interests to realise Vision 2020, which is of paramount importance to all Malaysians.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said they should stand united in implementing the Ninth Malaysia Plan (9MP), which would provide an impetus to help the nation attain developed nation status.

The Prime Minister, also BN chairman, said although Umno, MCA and MIC had struggled for the interests of specific races, they should move forward as a single entity when it came to the nation's future.

"When it comes to national in-

terest, the various races must realise the importance of being united to achieve development and progress.

"It has been our practice to use consensus to decide what is best for the country and people. This is why it is vital for us to enhance our strength and solidarity," he said when opening the MIC's 60th general assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre, yesterday.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu and BN component party leaders.

Abdullah said the spirit of consensus had been the secret of the nation's success.

"This has been well tested and proven. I feel happy today as I have the support of all BN component party leaders when it comes

to issues of national interest and achieving Vision 2020."

The Prime Minister said anything that required compromise may be discussed in the spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation.

This, he said, was the principle that guided every BN component party.

"As a result Malaysians, regardless of race, enjoy harmonious and cordial racial relations."

On the 9MP, he said it and other development programmes were aimed at realising the national agenda.

"Vision 2020 is our most important mission. There is no other task more important than this. It is at the core of 9MP, followed by the 10th and 11th plans.

"We have to give undivided at-

tention to the huge task ahead for the country."

Abdullah said Vision 2020's success rested on a strong economy, human capital, education, closing the gap between poor and rich and the eradication of hardcore poverty by 2010. He said the Government also needed to enhance its public delivery system.

On the implementation of various projects and plans, he said there were some weaknesses and delays in carrying them out.

"Implementation has to be properly planned. If not, there will be various problems and shortcomings and these could lead to chaos.

"This is why we stress the need to enhance our public delivery system to achieve the goals."

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