

We are righting the wrongs, says Abdullah

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JAC OOI/THESUN



Abdullah is surrounded by journalists at the press conference in his office.

PUTRAJAYA: "The government has been putting right what is wrong," Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday, when asked to comment on former premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement that the government should put right things that are wrong.

"That is what the government is doing. What is wrong, we are putting right," he told a press conference at his office.

"The government has its own perception. The government has information.

"The perspective of the government cannot be the same as that of an individual because we look at things from a wide angle and in totality.

"We make the best decision based on the situation at that time. A situation demands disposition, policy and decision based on facts," he said.

Abdullah said matters that did not pose any problem previously did so now, such as the rise in oil price and the shortage of sugar.

"When we make a decision, we will know the reaction of the people. If the people do not like it, then we are in trouble. If we do not consider the interests of the people, we will face the consequences in the next election," he said.

Asked if there was an agreement with Mahathir to continue with his policies after

he took over as prime minister, Abdullah said the Barisan Nasional government has functioned on the premise of continuity of policy from the time of (first prime minister) Tunku Abdul Rahman but the approach to implementation differs.

"The policy objectives still continue but only the approach is different," he said.

For example, the objectives of restructuring society and eradicating poverty under the New Economic Policy are continuing but there have been modifications in terms of the approach that requires changes according to the current situation.

"The government has no other agenda when it used a different approach to attain the same objectives," he said.

On the clarification that the government has been giving to the issues raised by Mahathir, Abdullah said the government has given adequate and accurate explanations.

Asked whether government documents related to Proton would be declassified, Abdullah said it was up to Proton to provide explanation on matters related to it.

One of the issues raised by Mahathir was the non-renewal of Tengku Tan Sri Mahaleel Tengku Ariff's contract as Proton chief executive.

Earlier, Abdullah said he does not have