

Use better delivery as push factor: Abdullah

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PUTRAJAYA: The momentum towards improving the public delivery system, which has picked up speed over the last year, should be used as a push factor towards achieving first-class standards in the public service, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

Addressing high-ranking civil servants at the 8th Public Services Primary, he said there has been much improvement to the public delivery system and the public sector after the setting up of Pemudah (the Special task Force to Facilitate Business).

"Our efforts towards these improvements in 2007 have breathed new life into the public service sector, but more needs to be done towards becoming the most excellent public service in the world," he said.

"The next phase this year should be towards improving on these achievements, and aiming for standards which have been attained by the best in this class.

"We have to constantly remind ourselves that other nations will not be resting on their laurels, especially countries like Vietnam, China and India, which are constantly pursuing development and improving their level of competitiveness.

"Thus, we must never be satisfied and (must) frequently step up our efforts in

making improvements until we achieve first-class public service standards."

On the need to improve the public delivery system to make Malaysia more competitive, Abdullah said: "When there are delays, the cost of funding a business goes up."

For instance, when a Certificate of Fitness (for buildings and houses) is not issued on time, this results in loss of opportunity cost, including rent.

"This building is there but one cannot do anything with it, and that is why I always emphasise the need to make fast decisions," he said.

"When there is a delay and waiting is involved, this also encourages corruption, as some people try to push the envelope.

"Luckily, there are some officers who do not accept bribes and recently, it is commendable to note that some government officers have actually reported bribe offers to the Anti-Corruption

Agency."

Abdullah said all these improvements have contributed to Malaysia's improved ranking in the World Competitiveness Ranking Report by the Swiss-based Institute of Management Development.

Malaysia is ranked just below nations like the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany and China, in some instances, in addition to performing better than countries like Japan and South Korea.

Abdullah said Malaysia was also ranked 19 in the World Trade Organisation's World's Leading Trading Countries Report.

