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## Urgent need for uniform fatwa to avoid confusion

MALACCA, Fri. - Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said there was an urgent need for uniformity in the fatwa (rulings) to avoid confusion among the people.

He said this, however, did not mean that the Government had the intention to curb the activities or power of the mufti.

"More often than not, we hear of contradictory views or rulings by mufti in matters pertaining to zakat fitrah (tithes) and others. Therefore, it is important to have a standardised fatwa so that people will no longer be confused."

He was speaking after launching the Prophet Muhammad's birthday celebration at the Tahfiz Al-Quran Darul Aikam in Bukit Pegoh today.

Abdullah was commenting on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who said yesterday that the powers of the mufti were not meant to be abused to issue fatwa by bypassing set procedures.

Dr Mahathir said there were mufti who slandered the Government for its moderate stand in enforcing the Syariah.

The Prime Minister said there were mufti who go about making anti-Government speeches. They were abusing their powers because their salaries are paid by the Government.

Abdullah, who is also Foreign Minister, added the Government's effort would also enable the people to differentiate the next time around between views or plain comments by mufti and fatwa.

To another question, Abdullah described the proposal to drop the word 'baru' in Umno which would be raised during the party assembly on Sept 5 as appropriate and timely.

"There should not be Umno lama or Umno baru. It should be just Umno."

Umno secretary-general Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik said yesterday that a special session would be held to get consent from delegates to drop the word before it is referred to the Registrar of Societies for endorsement.

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