

Dollah: It¹² must have been^{84.9.98} difficult for Dr M

By WONG SAI WAN

DURBAN (South Africa): Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad must have thought deeply before removing Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim from his government posts.

Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the Prime Minister likes Anwar very much and that it would have been difficult for him to come to this decision.

"He had always said that Anwar was his chosen successor. There surely must have been very serious reasons for him to take such shocking action. He must be very sad over the whole matter," he told Malaysian reporters here yesterday.

Abdullah said he spoke to Dr Mahathir in the morning and expressed his support for the action taken against Anwar.

"No matter how much he liked Anwar, he knew he had no choice in the matter.

"This is especially so now that our attention should be given towards overcoming the economic crisis," he added.

Abdullah is here to lead the Malaysian delegation to the Non-Aligned Summit.

Asked about his conversation with Dr Mahathir, Abdullah said he told the Prime Minister that the people and Umno members would surely support him when they come to know of the reason for Anwar's sacking.

On Anwar's claims that he was framed by high level officials, Abdullah said Anwar was free to make such accusations but must be prepared to prove them.