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No need to appoint DPM while I'm away: Dr Mahathir

Kamarul Yunus

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who leaves for a five-day visit to Japan today, says there is no need for him to appoint a Deputy Prime Minister while he is away.

"I have two Deputy Home Ministers (Datuk Tajol Rosli Ghazali and Datuk Ong Kah Ting) and there is also a Second Finance Minister (Datuk Mustapa Mohamed)," he said after launching the National Unity Day celebration in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

"They can contact me anytime ... no problem ... if there is a need, I can fly back. It is just a six-hour flight from Tokyo," said Dr Mahathir, who is also First Finance Minister and Home Minister.

Asked to comment on a meeting between Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Ismail and US Ambassador John Mallot, Dr Mahathir said the Government does not prevent anyone meeting anybody.

"If they want to meet, we are not stopping them ... just do not tell lies, that's all," he said, apparently referring to the foreign media.

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