

Abdullah to take over duties when PM is away

PUTRAJAYA: In the absence of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is going on a month-long leave starting today, his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi will take over his duties.

Dr Mahathir said while he is on leave, Abdullah would be carrying the duties of the prime minister, but not on an official basis.

"It can be said that he (Abdullah) will carry out my duties as the prime minister, but not officially as an acting prime minister," he told reporters when asked about Abdullah's position while he is away overseas.

Asked why was Abdullah not made an acting Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir said:

"It is other people who are concerned about protocol. I am not one who cares much about protocol. He is going to be carrying out the duties of the prime minister, so there is no reason for others to try to make an issue out of this."