

Abdullah to be acting PM when Dr M goes on leave

Not - 4 MAR 2

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi will be the acting Prime Minister and acting Finance Minister when Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad goes on leave for two months, from Thursday until May 4.

A statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office today said the Yang di-Pertuan Agong had been notified of the matter.

According to the statement, during his leave, Dr Mahathir would make a working visit to Brazil and Jeddah.

He would also attend the emergency session of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in Doha, Qatar.

Qatar, which is the OIC chairman, had called for the meeting to discuss the threat of war on Iraq and the Middle East crisis.

It is being held after an informal meeting of the 57-nation member organisation in Kuala Lumpur last Wednesday, called by Malaysia, which took advantage of the presence of many OIC leaders at the 13th Non-Aligned Movement summit.

The Kuala Lumpur meeting agreed that war was not the answer to resolving the issue of weapons of mass destruction allegedly owned by Iraq. It also called on Iraq to comply with UN Resolution 1441 on disarmament.