

Allow Pak Lah to decide on his deputy, says Dr M

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OKINAWA: Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi should be allowed to make his decision concerning the deputy prime minister's post and Umno members should remain calm, former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

"In my case, I waited until the Umno assembly to choose the deputy

and then I took him as deputy. I did not appoint my own deputy prime minister either," he said.

However, in Abdullah's case, the Umno election is a long time away, "so he needs to make a decision himself."

He was replying to a question that there was a lot of speculation on who the Prime Minister would appoint as

his deputy.

Dr Mahathir was speaking to Malaysian reporters after participating in the one-day Globalisation Forum 2003 here yesterday.

On the forum, he said it was good to hear the views of other speakers and their perception on the subject matter.

On remarks that he was missed by

Malaysians, he said: "Of course, if there are people who miss me, I'm flattered but I think the people will get used to the new leadership."

He also said Malaysians should be thankful and proud to live in a multi-racial society "without too much stress and tension. I think this is something quite unique."