

21/05/2003

Abdullah: No need to change foreign policy

PASIR GUDANG, Tues. - Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi will not change the nation's foreign policy after taking over as Prime Minister from Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in October.

Abdullah said the existing foreign policy was still "relevant" and there was no need for change.

"I fully support the country's existing foreign policy," he said on Dr Mahathir's statement yesterday that he (Dr Mahathir) hoped his successor would continue with the foreign policy.

"I see no need to change anything."

Malaysia's foreign policy, he said, was a collective decision of the Cabinet, not that of the Prime Minister alone.

Abdullah, however, said the policy would be reviewed from time to time, depending on the situation.

Earlier, he visited Tanjung Langsat Port here, which is being developed into a specialty port for the handling of hazardous chemicals.

Also present were Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Sports and Youth Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein, Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, JCorp chief executive officer Tan Sri Muhammad Ali Hashim and State Exco members.

On the situation in Aceh, Abdullah said if the conflict there worsened, there might be an exodus of people to Malaysia.

"But for now, there is nothing we can do as this is Indonesia's internal problem and no country has the right to interfere in their affairs."