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Ahmad Umno's important day

KEMAMAN, Sat. - Tomorrow is an important day for Ahmad Umno Supajita Uzir, 32, as he will be given the honour of welcoming Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to the State.

Notified just two days ago of the rare opportunity to meet the Prime Minister in person, Ahmad Umno could not hide his excitement.

"I will clad myself in an Umno flag and hand a party flag to the Prime Minister when he touches down at the Sultan Mahmud Airport at 2.45pm," he said at his home in Kampung Banggol today.

Ahmad Umno said he was sure that his name would someday cause him to meet the country's Prime Minister in person, but he was not sure when, until two days ago when a letter notifying him of the appointment and signed by State Umno deputy liaison chief Idris Jusoh, arrived.

"I always knew I would get the opportunity to meet the Prime Minister, and though I am a little sad about not being able to thank Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in person, I am excited that I will be greeting his successor," he said.

Ahmad Umno, who runs a small business with his wife Zaleha Muda, 25, was born in Kampung Banggol, Kemaman, during Umno's Silver Jubilee celebrations on April 28, 1971, and his parents are staunch supporters of the party.

His late father, Uzir Mahmood, was once a Kemaman Umno committee member and his mother Esah Hamad, 75, was also active in the party's Wanita committee.

The youngest of five children, Ahmad Umno recalled how his father came up with his name.

"My father was a close friend of second Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak and he told him about his idea of naming me Ahmad Umno in conjunction with the party celebrating its 25th anniversary.

"Tun Razak suggested adding Supajita as it means `ship', which was the party symbol at that time."