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Boss's choice

CALM down, Umno. The endorsement of Datuk Seri Najib Razak for the party's second-highest post by the Chenderoh division chief Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz was a personal statement of his, reiterating a sentiment already expressed by Prime Minister and Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad himself.

Abdullah will make his own decision when the time comes, based on his administrative requirements and what he feels will be in his best interests as well as the interests of the party, the Government and nation. This little temblor of dudgeon would have not erupted around Nazri's statement had Umno stalwarts such as party veep Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin remained quiet after Abdullah reminded Umno divisions on Monday not to name any candidate for the post of Deputy Prime Minister. This decision is Abdullah's to make and the party to deliberate.

But all this should now be seen as a perhaps unnecessary but possibly useful reminder that Umno's course of succession is set. The quiet triumph of political management involved in this smooth transition of leadership need not be sullied by offstage intrigues. There is a system in place and a process in motion. There is no call for pre-emptive gambits or shadow-play.

We believe Abdullah will choose wisely and well, and we would like to see Umno trust its own system enough not to work itself into too much of a lather over this.