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Fair formula for BN seat distribution, says Abdullah

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is set to become the new Barisan Nasional chairman, said today that an effective and fair formula will be determined for the distribution of seats among component parties.

He said this included the possibility of seat-swapping among the parties.

"I assure all parties that the distribution of seats, including the 25 new parliamentary seats, will be done fairly according to what has been advised by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad," he said after attending the opening of the People's Progressive Party 50th general assembly by Dr Mahathir.

He said he would ensure the distribution was acceptable to all, adding that to date, there had been no official discussions on the matter, "We will wait for the right time before making any decision."

On the agenda of the Umno supreme council meeting on Thursday, Abdullah, who is also Umno deputy president, said more time would be given for Dr Mahathir to speak.

"We will give Dr Mahathir more time to speak on any matter, including giving advice and his views on the future of Umno. It is up to him. We will be more than happy to hear his advice."

He said Umno also had plans to have a thankyou dinner for Dr Mahathir after the Hari Raya celebration.