

**Abdullah: Najib shall be Umno president**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Mar 24, 09**  
**Syed Jaymal Zahiid**

Nobody can stop Najib Abdul Razak from becoming the new Umno president. Period.

That was what the sixth Umno president Abdullah Ahmad Badawi told reporters in an apparent bid to dispel any speculations that the transition of power will not take place.

Day 1 - 59th UMNO general assembly Abdullah made the statement following queries by reporters that a splinter group in the party had tried to apply for Registrar of Societies to stop the party's 59th AGM from taking place.

It is also believed that the group in doing so had wanted to stop Najib from taking over as the party's seventh president.

"Who are doing all this? Why do you believe all this things. It can never happen. How can anybody stop the Umno AGM.

"Nothing can stop what has already been decided. Najib will become Umno president soon. And when there is confirmation, there will be a transition," he told a press conference held after the closed-door presidential briefing to party delegates.

However, he said the transition plan was not discussed at all during the presidential briefing to other party delegates early this evening as the matter has already been accepted by party members.

"It is a topic that everyone have already known and understood," he said.

No date has been set for the power transfer and it is still no clear when Najib will be sworn in as the new prime minister.

There are speculations that Abdullah may announce the date at the assembly.

### **'Take this elections seriously'**

He then added that what was most important at this point is for the party delegates to focus on the party elections as the poll outcome would definitely affect the nation's future.

"What is most important are the elections and the role of the voters, therefore it is important for them to take this elections seriously as they would be voting for the new leadership that will bring confidence to the party and the people.

"Whoever they elect is not just for the party members only as we must consider that the new Umno leadership will play a big role in the leadership of the government," he told a press conference after the party's closed-door presidential briefing.

Day 1 - 59th UMNO general assembly Abdullah also reminded them to avoid infighting and reminded them not to let the party elections cause internal fighting and other unwanted incidents that would be detrimental to everyone.

Abdullah was also asked what he felt given that this would be his last address to the delegates as the party president.

Replying to the question, Abdullah said he was not even thinking about the matter.

"I forgot about it (his last AGM as party president). I have been speaking to them (so) it's not a problem.

"We are not the sentimental type. I am not sad, I would be very happy to see Umno doing very well. I would be very happy if Umno people are happy (but) if they cry, I will follow them to cry lah," he said laughingly.

### **Good reasons to ban opposition papers**

Meanwhile, Abdullah also commented on the government's decision to ban PAS and PKR's newspapers Harakah and Suara Keadilan from publishing for three months.

"The government must have a good reason to do so," he said.

Opposition parties claimed the ban was a clampdown on press freedom and an effort to muzzle them ahead of three impending by-elections.

The outgoing prime minister and Umno president was asked if he wanted the "crackdown" on media freedom to be his final note as PM.

"What has it got to do with me?" replied Abdullah.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/100907>