

Agreement to meet a positive step, says Najib

PUTRAJAYA: The fact that Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will meet reflects the sincerity and determination of both sides to settle any differences between them, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said.

He said the agreement to meet was not only a positive step but also timely for both the Prime Minister and his predecessor to meet for a heart-to-heart talk.

"This is a positive development and I believe this is also what the majority of Umno members want," he told reporters after calling on Thai Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont at a hotel here yesterday.

Najib, who is Umno deputy president, believed that whatever issues were troubling them could not be solved through public statements.

"It may help if they meet so that they can voice everything in a doled anlfprivate environment I certainly welcome this," he said.

Asked if things would change, for the better once Abdullah and Dr Mahathir met, Najib said: "We hope there will be a

change, but we have to wait and see what transpires at the meeting."

He lauded Abdullah's agreement to meet Dr Mahathir, and said even though he was heavily criticised, he was still willing to meet his predecessor.

"It reflects sincerity on the Prime Minister's part. It is a good sign and a gesture which we all appreciate," he said.

Meanwhile, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam said it would be the best Hari Raya gift for Malaysians if Abdullah and Dr Mahathir could patch things up.

"I believe the spirit of Ramadan will help resolve many unsettled issues. We can then move on and focus on work to develop the country," he said.

Perak Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Tajol Rosli Ghazali welcomed the meeting, saying that it was a meeting which Malaysians were looking 'forward to.

"I am certain it will be good for all parties. We will be one big family again," he said after chairing the state exco meeting in Ipoh.