

# Malaysians advised to avoid visiting Thailand

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**NEW YORK:** Malaysians should not go to Thailand if curfew or martial law has been declared in the country, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

The Prime Minister said there was no advisory against Malaysians visiting Thailand at the moment but those who intend to enter the country should continuously monitor the situation there.

News of the military coup in Thailand had come as a shock to Abdullah.

"I was taken aback. This is not the way for a change of government. There should be an election," said the Prime Minister.

Abdullah, who is attending the 61st UN general assembly, told Malaysian reporters on Tuesday night that he would have liked to meet his Thai

counterpart Thaksin Shinawatra who was here, too.

"I would have liked to have asked him what happened, but I have been too busy with work."

Abdullah hoped a general election would take place in Thailand at an appropriate time and that the kingdom would eventually have a democratically elected government.

In **Kuala Lumpur**, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the Government did not anticipate the Thai coup to have any security impact on Malaysia.

"We do not think there will be any untoward activities in the Thai-Malaysian border area. But with such developments taking place, our security forces are maintaining high vigilance and are monitoring the latest developments in Bangkok and in the south.

"At the moment, we consider this purely an internal and domestic matter for the Thais

and it is not for us to interfere with what's going on there," the Deputy Prime Minister told a press conference yesterday.

When asked if Malaysia, as a member of Asean, would recognise Thailand's interim government, he said: "We are watching the developments. Obviously, we would not want to be in a position where Thailand has a military government.

"What is important is for them to decide on what kind of constitution they want to have - the present one or a new one to be put in place, a government supported by the people through a democratic process.

"I don't think it will require any recognition at this stage because this is just an interim solution for the Thais."

He also advised Malaysians not to visit southern Thailand if there was no urgent need to do so.

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