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Abdullah denies involvement in project

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi yesterday denied any personal interest in the US\$800 million (RM2.96 billion) United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme in Iraq.

"Anyone can say whatever they want," he said.

"I have got no interest (in the programme) ... recommending people an opportunity to participate does not imply that I have been involved in any dealings. It is quite normal for government leaders to write letters of introduction for any particular group seeking genuine business opportunities."

Abdullah was responding to allegations posted on the Internet that he benefited by recommending his sister-in-law's company for the programme using his office as the then deputy prime minister.

The Internet posting referred to two reports on the programme, by Charles Duelfer and Paul A. Volcker.

Both reports named Abdullah's connection to the programme via Malaysian companies.