

Abdullah makes courtesy call on Dr Mahathir

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UNDER ordinary circumstances it would hardly be noticed, but when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his predecessor Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had a meeting in Tokyo yesterday, it rang bells.

Firstly, it was thousands of kilometres from home, and secondly, it was not in the best of times considering the fact that the former Prime Minister had been critical of

late of some decisions of the present administration.

But Abdullah was quick to quell speculation when he was asked about the meeting at a scheduled Press conference later in the afternoon. "Yes, I did call on Tun," said Abdullah. "But it was only to say hello and to tell him about my visit and my meetings with several Japanese businessmen here. Nothing more than that. And

please don't speculate."

The Prime Minister had been in Japan since Monday, chiefly for business networking purposes and to speak at the annual Nikkei conference on Thursday.

Dr Mahathir arrived on Wednesday and he was also one of the participants at the Nikkei meet, though at a different session and on a different day.

Both stayed in the same hotel —

the Imperial Tokyo — which, with more than 1,000 rooms, 69 suites and multi-wings, is so huge that there was no encounter until yesterday.

It took place just after breakfast, when Abdullah walked to the Tower Block and went up to Dr Mahathir's room on the 31st floor and they met one-on-one for about 15 minutes before both had to leave for respective engagements.