

Mukhriz regrets making remark

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KUALA LUMPUR: Umno Youth exco member Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir has expressed regret over his remark about Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's keynote address when opening the Umno general assembly last week.

In a two-paragraph statement yesterday, he said: "I accepted the disapproval of the Honourable Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, Umno Youth chief, towards me recently.

"I regret and wish to state that I did not intend to hurt anyone's feelings, especially the Right Honourable Umno president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on my remark towards his policy speech as reported by some media."

Commenting on the prime minister's keynote address last Wednesday during the party's annual gathering, Mukhriz was reported as saying, among others, that the speech did not contain new ideas.

This drew the ire of the Umno

Youth leadership who regarded it as belittling Abdullah and embarrassing the movement, which always supported Abdullah's leadership and his policy speech at the assembly.

Hishammuddin and Umno Youth state leaders also called on Mukhriz to declare his position and to think whether it was appropriate for him to relinquish his post in the movement.

Mukhriz is Umno Youth's international relations and non-governmental organisation bureau chairman and a member of the Kubang Pasu Umno division committee.

Responding to Mukhriz's statement of regret, Abdullah said: "Oh, he regrets. Never mind. Let him say what he wants to say. It's up to him."

Abdullah said this when asked to comment after opening the Malaysia Agriculture, Horticulture and Agro-Tourism Show 2006 at the Taman Ekspo Pertanian Malaysia in Serdang.