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I won't overstay as PM, says Abdullah

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KOTA KINABALU: Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi says he has no intention of overstaying as Prime Minister but wants to put all things in order before retiring.

Abdullah, the Umno president and Barisan Nasional chairman, wants to put the party and ruling coalition on a stronger footing first.

"I will retire one day. I will not stay any longer than I should. But there are things I would like to do now. Of course, I cannot leave at a time when the party is in this condition," he said when asked if he had a succession plan in mind after naming Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak as his successor.

Abdullah said he had no intention of remaining as Prime Minister "for years", adding: "Datuk Seri Najib understands more than you can understand it."

He said he had to ensure development programmes and schemes would be implemented effectively following the March 8 polls.

To another question, the Prime Minister dismissed talk that he was absolving himself of any blame for Umno and Barisan's dismal performance in the polls.