

Abdullah: AP issue resolved

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BY DEVID RAJAH

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi considers the issue of approved permits (APs) for imported cars that was raised by Proton adviser Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad resolved.

"I believe so," he said when asked if the issue had been resolved now that the International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz had sent a letter explaining

the issue to Dr Mahathir.

On Monday, Dr Mahathir claimed that 54,000 of the 67,000 APs issued last year were given to 20 companies, while the remainder went to 82 companies.

Abdullah, who spoke to reporters after closing the "National Workshop on Implementing Islam Hadhari" yesterday, confirmed that Rafidah had sent the letter to Dr Mahathir.

"I am sure by now Tun (Dr

Mahathir) would have received the letter," he said.

"I am not to reveal the contents of the letter, it's for Tun (Dr Mahathir)," he said.

Dr Mahathir also raised other issues such as low prices and the under-declaration of some imported cars, and the failure of a minister to investigate the situation despite directives being issued when he was prime minister.

He also called on the Government to reveal the names of AP

holders.

Dr Mahathir has previously said that Proton would be able to compete in the country without protection but needed fair competition and a level playing field.

Following Dr Mahathir's statement, Rafidah explained the matter to the Cabinet, which directed her to write to Dr Mahathir.

On Thursday Rafidah said that she had shown the letter to Abdullah and Deputy Prime

Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak for endorsement before delivering it to Dr Mahathir.

The AP system, introduced by the Government in 1970, is aimed at encouraging bumiputra entrepreneurs to be involved in the industry.

On another matter, Abdullah said Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain met him on Friday and asked to be excused from attending the Umno General Assembly next week for

health reasons.

"I gave him permission and we spoke about his health," said Abdullah, who advised Syed Razak to rest.

To a question, Abdullah said Syed Razak would not be replaced as he was recovering from paresis.

"*Tak ada pengganti, tak ada* (no replacement, no)," he said when asked if an acting menteri besar would be appointed if Syed Razak were to go on leave.