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Shut up after handover, Dr M tells Abdullah

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PUTRAJAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has welcomed Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's decision not to seek re-election as Umno president and to step down as prime minister next year.

The former prime minister said Abdullah's decision came at the right time as Umno could focus on rebuilding itself.

"I am very happy for Umno... not for

myself, but for Umno. A lot of things need to be done and I hope there is no obstruction in efforts to revive Umno and other BN component parties," Dr Mahathir said.

He hoped that Abdullah would give his successor Datuk Seri Najib Razak a free hand in running the party and government.

"He must keep quiet and let Najib run the show," Dr Mahathir, who has

been vocal in his criticism of his successor, said.

He said the deputy prime minister had before shown himself as a capable administrator.

He also endorsed International Trade and Industry Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin as Najib's deputy.

Asked if he would rejoin Umno, Dr Mahathir said he would if it meant that he could boost the party.