

# UM stays put, says Abdullah

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## Varsity of historical importance and ideally located

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**KEPALA BATAS:** The Prime Minister has shot down a proposal to redevelop the site of the main campus of Universiti Malaya (UM) through a land swap.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the university, which occupied 303ha of prime land in Kuala Lumpur, should remain at its existing site in Jalan Lembah Pantai "forever".

The former UM graduate said the

university must retain its existing location because of its historical significance.

"I personally feel it should not be relocated. It has served the nation well and I hope it will continue to do that.

"The location is perfect and adequate. The university can plan to open new branch campuses elsewhere if the board decides to do so.

"There is no problem," Abdullah told reporters when asked to comment on a real estate company's re-

development proposal after launching *Semarak Merdeka* in conjunction with the country's 50th Merdeka celebrations at the Bertam sports complex here.

Abdullah said UM had produced many graduates who were successful in various fields.

The university was established on Oct 8, 1949, as a national institution to serve the higher education needs of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore.

It was reported that a company had offered its land in Sepang for the

relocation of the university to pave the way for a RM10bil housing and commercial centre.

On another matter, Abdullah who is also the chairman of the Organisation of Islamic Countries, said he was saddened by the infighting between the Palestinian Hamas and Fatah groups.

He hoped they would find an amicable solution soon.

"They should be united in their fight against Israel as fighting among themselves would only weaken the Palestinian government."