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Struggle to be successful, Abdullah tells people

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MALACCA: For a race or civilisation to continue its existence, it should be relevant and strive to reach greater heights and not be complacent with what it has achieved, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

Speaking at the opening of the Convention on the Malay and Islamic World, he said this was why the Malay civilisation should strive to be *Cemerlang, Gemilang and Terbilang*.

"For a civilisation to be successful it would surely take time and it cannot be achieved in one convention. We have to struggle to be successful. I use successful as it is an idealism.

"This is why I am happy that in his speech, the Chief Minister of Malacca Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam touched on the importance of us being *Cemerlang, Gemilang and Terbilang*," he said.

Addressing participants in the convention from Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Singapore, Abdullah who is also the OIC chairman, said the words *Cemerlang, Gemilang and Terbilang* should always be in the minds of the people as they would be the motivation to reach greater heights.

"If there is no initiative for us to go forward we would be left behind. Given time the civilisation would no longer be around or we would be left behind. When this happens no one would come and help us or would pay any attention to us.

"If we are successful, people would look up to us and we could not only contribute to other races



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi beating the drum at the launch of the Convention on the Malay and Islamic World. On his right is Chief Minister of Malacca Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam.

but to mankind," he said.

Abdullah said only then would the Malay civilisation be distinguished.

"This does not mean we are arrogant. Striving for development and excellence is something which is required by Islam and it is in accordance with the Quran."

Abdullah also touched on the importance of acquiring knowledge and human capital development.

"Knowledge does not stop but it is a process which one would acquire in his entire life. Knowledge is also important in human capital development. Nothing is more important to a civilisation than knowledge," he said.

Abdullah was awarded the

Mansur Shah Award for his contribution and struggle for the Malay race at the international level. The award was presented to Abdullah by Mohd Ali, who is also the Malay and Islamic World president, and witnessed by Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Hassan.

Abdullah who later took questions from the delegates, said the building of a bridge from Malacca to Dumai in Indonesia had to take into consideration its viability.

"I have told Ali Rustam that to build a bridge across the Straits of Malacca is not cheap and it should not be a project which is half-baked.

"We have to look into various aspects before deciding on the

matter but I am not saying no, nor am I saying yes," he said in reply to a question by a delegate from Indonesia.

Another Indonesian delegate also posed the idea of setting up the Malay and Islam World Bank to which Abdullah said it was something which could be considered.

"This is much more easier compared to the bridge project..." he said, adding that a licence for the bank could be obtained but the cost would be high.

"Maybe we could start with a small bank. We also have to look at the nature of the bank. Would it be a commercial, development, import and export or merchant bank?" Abdullah said.