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Not about ruling over others

Pak Lah explains meaning of 'ketuanan Melayu'

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KUALA LUMPUR: The definition of *ketuanan Melayu* (Malay supremacy) is not about the Malays being in a position to dominate, rule over and force their power upon other races, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

He said Malay supremacy meant that the Malays, as the indigenous people in Malaysia, needed to strengthen themselves to ensure they were successful and developed.

"If they are not successful and developed, then they are not *tuan* (masters); therefore they will be coolies. I am sure we do not want to become coolies who do not play any role in development because we are weak and not able.

"So when we talk about that (Malay supremacy), we mean we must be successful in many fields. It is never about ruling over others, or forcing our power upon them," he told reporters after chairing the

Umno supreme council meeting last night.

Abdullah, who is also Umno president, was asked about Malay supremacy being weakened due to Barisan Nasional's losses in the general election and because the Malays were split between Umno, PKR and PAS.

He added that there were still matters related to the Malays that needed to be further improved and enhanced, although their successes were evident.

"We are not going to be a race that dominates others. We want to be a party that represents the Malays and that is ready to co-operate for the future of Malays and the people, as Malays will also succeed when all Malaysians are successful.

"That is Malay supremacy and I hope people will understand it," he said.

On Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein's apology for wielding the *keris* (Malay dagger) at the party's annual assembly that had upset non-Malays in the country, Abdullah said it was a brave act by



Serious talk: Abdullah and Hishammuddin in deep discussion at the Umno supreme council meeting in Kuala Lumpur last night.

the Youth chief.

"He wanted to put the issue to rest. I must say it is a brave move because he knows that many Malays might get angry with him.

"At least by his action, he has also made non-Malays understand about the function and position of the *keris*

in Malay society. It would also no longer cause others to be frightened or worried."

He said that Hishammuddin also wanted to clear the misunderstanding with the other component parties.

"We must acknowledge that we

are friends in Barisan. This is Umno's assurance to the other component parties," he said.

Handwritten signature or initials.