Don’t confuse people with APC issue, bloggers told

KUALA LUMPUR: Defence Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi has told pro-Opposition bloggers not to confuse the people with the issue of acquisition of 6x6 armoured cars with the locally-made AV8.

He said the Government was studying the suitability of the 6x6 armoured car for use by the army under UN Interim Force In Lebanon (Unifil), while the RM8bil AV8 project was a plan for a made-in-Malaysia armoured car.

“They should understand that AV8 is an armoured personnel carrier (APC) with 12 variants for use in Malaysia, while the 6x6 APC is for Unifil,” he said after witnessing the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the National Service Training Department and Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris here yesterday.

Dr Ahmad Zahid was asked to comment on claims in Opposition blogs quoting Indonesian sources as saying that the Government had selected 32 Anoa armoured cars manufactured by PT Pindad of Indonesia because it was cheaper than the AV8.

He said the Government evaluated several 6x6 armoured cars from abroad, including the Anoa from Indonesia, but had not made a decision.

Dr Ahmad Zahid clarified that the need for a 6x6 armoured car for Malaysian soldiers in Lebanon was pressing because the existing Condor, which has been in use since the 1980s, was no longer suitable.

He said the development of the AV8 might take up to even 15 years.

“The prototype is expected to be completed next year but for Unifil, the Condor is not suitable as it is 4x4. We need a 6x6.”

On another matter, Dr Ahmad Zahid said water-based activities at national service training camps nationwide would resume in the near future.