

# Review if 'new facts emerge'

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THE government will only review the 1988 sacking of Lord President Tun Salleh Abbas and two Supreme Court judges if "new and important" facts emerge.

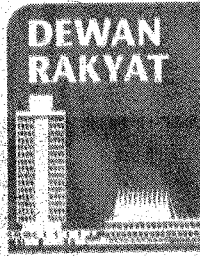
Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz said until then the case would remain closed.

"If there are new and important facts in the case, the government is prepared to review the case," he said in a statement to the Press yesterday.

He said until such time, there was no need for a new tribunal to review the decision of two judicial tribunals that had been accepted by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and the government in 1988.

The statement contained Nazri's prepared reply to Members of Parliament, most of which he failed to deliver on Monday due to pressure from the opposition in the House.

He had been winding up the debate pertaining to the Prime Minister's Department when he was forced to cut his



## ■ Reports by Wan Hamidi Hamid and Eileen Ng

80-page speech to just 20 pages.

Nazri told the *New Straits Times* outside the House yesterday that the information he referred to could be in the form of statements from the three affected persons that they had been pressured into leaving their jobs.

"If they can show that they were pressured into admitting that they had made wrong decisions, then we are prepared to review their cases," he said, adding that they would have to come out in the open with their statements.

Nazri said only information from those judges sacked during judicial crisis would be used "and not simply information from anybody".

On Aug 8, 1988, Salleh and five Supreme Court judges — Tan Sri Azmi Kamaruddin, Tan Sri Eusoffe Abdoolcader, Tan Sri Wan Hamzah Mohamed Salleh, Tan Sri Wan Sulaiman Pawanteh and Datuk George Seah — were accused by the government of misconduct.

The five were suspended but Salleh, Wan Sulaiman and Seah were later sacked.

On civil courts and the issue of apostasy, Nazri said civil courts had no jurisdiction on the matter as it came under the Syariah Court.

He said the Cabinet had decided on July 27 that Article 121 (1A) would not be amended to define the powers of a specific court. Nazri said the decision was consistent with several Federal Court and High Court decisions.

"In those cases, the higher courts of this country consis-

were more sensitive than racial issues.

Nazri said the government continued to engage in inter-religious dialogue in open or closed-door sessions.

On death threats against lawyer Malik Intiaz Sarwar who has been championing the need to ensure religious freedom under Article 11, Nazri said police investigations were still on-going.

He said the Attorney-General's Chambers had yet to receive the final report on the matter from the police.

He said the A-G's Chambers had informed him that Malik had lodged a police report at the Dang Wangi police station on Aug 21.

The case had been classified as criminal intimidation by an anonymous communication under Section 507 of the Penal Code.

Malik has also held a watching brief for the Bar Council in the case of Lina Joy, a Malay woman who wanted to delete the word "Islam" from her identity card.

tently decided that based on Article 121 (1A) of the Federal Constitution, Civil Courts had no jurisdiction on matters under the purview of Syariah Courts," he said.

On Article 11 and 121 of the Federal Constitution, Nazri said the government had issued a directive to stop discussions on them as any debate could generate uneasy feelings or threaten national security.

He said religious issues