

# PM's views on hot issues

The Star - 21/1/2006

## On the memorandum sent by Cabinet ministers and Article 121(1A) of the Federal Constitution

**Q: Is it appropriate for 10 Cabinet ministers to submit a memorandum to you asking for a review of laws affecting the rights of non-Muslims?**

A: They gave it to me after the Cabinet meeting. By right, if there is any problem it should be brought up in the Cabinet meeting rather than submitting their views in the form of a memorandum. I would prefer it that way. Since they have submitted it to me, and if necessary, I will raise the discussion at the Cabinet meeting.

**Q: What is the content of the memorandum?**

A: I did not have time to read it. I am busy with the preparation for the Ninth Malaysia plan.

**Q: Do you think it was not done in the spirit of Barisan Nasional?**

A: I don't know why they acted that way. Probably they wanted to give their combined opinion.

**Q: Do you think the memorandum has created an uncomfortable situation?**

A: It is not ordinary. It has never happened this way. It is not a normal procedure. I prefer it to be discussed at the Cabinet meeting. But I did not say I do not accept it. I accept it. I said: "Ok-lah".

**Q: You said earlier that the laws in the country have to be made clear with regards to conversion.**

A: I did not say that. I said other laws that seem to create problems and could be misinterpreted should be

looked at to see whether amendments should be made. I did not touch on any specific law.

**Q: Is there a need to amend Article 121(1A)?**

A: To me there is no need. Maybe other provisions under related laws should be looked into.

**Q: Is it possible for Article 121(1A) to be amended?**

A: It is not possible anymore.

**Q: But at the moment the law is being studied by the Attorney-General.**

A: That is true. Right now it is under consideration by the Attorney-General. He is meeting various parties to discuss the matter before forwarding it to the Cabinet ministers through me.

**Q: Does that mean that the status of the civil court is higher than the Syariah court?**

A: The status quo of the civil court and the Syariah court will remain. The jurisdictions of the civil court and the Syariah court are clear.

**Q: Does that mean that their status are equal?**

A: It is not a question of status. It is two separate branches. The issue of having the same level does not arise.

**Q: So what is the option since Article 121(1A) would not be amended?**

A: If there are related laws that need to be amended, we will consider.

**Q: Will the matter affect the peace and harmony under your leadership?**

A: The controversy can be controlled. There are limits to discussions in an

## Article 121. Judicial power of the Federation

1. There shall be two High Courts of co-ordinate jurisdiction and status, namely

a) one in the States of Malaya, which shall be known as the High Court in Malaya and shall have its principal registry at such place as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong may determine; and

b) one in the States of Sabah and Sarawak, which shall be known as the High Court in Sabah and Sarawak and shall have its principal registry at such place in the States of Sabah and Sarawak as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong may determine;

c) (repealed)

and such inferior courts as may be provided by federal law and the High Courts and inferior courts shall have such jurisdiction and powers as may be conferred by or under federal law.

(1A) The courts referred to in clause (1) shall have no jurisdiction in respect of any matter within the jurisdiction of the Syariah courts.

objective manner. It is important to consider views. We should not be emotional and raise things that create sensitivity in a multi-racial and multi-religious society. It is a matter of how we act and speak. If we act and speak wrongly and incite emotions by raising matters unnecessarily, we can create an environment that is not conducive. If we raise matters that can pose a threat to the nation's political stability, it will affect efforts to develop the country and achieve success. We should give priority to discussions in a peaceful, harmonious and respectful environment.

**Q: Certain quarters said that the civil court can decide on certain matters relating to Muslims.**

A: Don't do that. Don't bring that kind of argument up. The civil court and Syariah court have their own roles and responsibilities.

**Q: Are you going to discuss the**

**matter at this week's Cabinet meeting?**

A: In the Cabinet meeting we will discuss contentious issues. *Walla-hualam* it will depend on the Cabinet members.

## On Proton and Volkswagen

**Q: Is Proton talking to Volkswagen?**

A: Yes. There was a statement made by the Proton chief executive officer in the United States at a function. Proton wrote formally to indicate its situation.

**Q: Does Proton talk to other parties apart from Volkswagen?**

A: Proton talks to other people, too.

**On the proposed merger of ECM Libra and Avenue Capital which involves his son-in-law Khairy Jamaluddin, who is also Umno Youth deputy chief**

**Q: Are you going to approve the proposed merger between ECM Libra and Avenue Capital?**

A: I am not involved in any way. I don't know.

**On the appeal for the PM's intervention made by Amica Technologies Sdn Bhd which is seeking US\$200mil from the Government**

**Q: Will you meet Amica?**

A: The man (Amica Technologies president Mohammad Minhaj Khokhar) wants to meet me before he goes back tomorrow.

**On the Court of Appeal judgment on toll concessionaire Metramac which mentioned former finance minister Tun Daim Zainuddin and prominent businessmen Tan Sri Halim Saad and Datuk Anuar Othman**

**Q: Will the Government intervene in the Metramac issue?**

A: There are charges against certain parties caused by what the Court of Appeal judge mentioned. Although it was mentioned in passing, it certainly created public interest.

**Q: Will the Government investigate the case?**

A: The Government will only investigate based on reports or if there is any offence.

**Q: Does the Government intend to investigate the case?**

A: It is not a question of wanting to investigate or not. Investigation will be carried out if there is an offence and there is proof.