

Five Cabinet ministers meet Pak Lah over memo

KUALA LUMPUR: Five of the nine non-Muslim Cabinet ministers who submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi met him yesterday morning over the matter.

They were Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy, Health Minister Datuk Dr Chua Soi Lek, Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu and

Energy, Water and Communications Minister Datuk Seri Lim Keng Yaik.

Lim, who is Gerakan president, said they had an hour-long meeting with Abdullah at his official residence Seri Perdana in Putrajaya from 9am.

"We received advice from the Prime Minister. Don't ask what advice and the content of the memorandum. What advice, you ask the Prime Minister. We went together.

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Since you people (the media) make it a hot issue, we thought it's better we discuss with the Prime Minister," he told reporters after the Gerakan monthly meeting yesterday.

The memorandum called for a review of laws affecting the rights of non-Muslims but Abdullah said that while Article 121(1A) of the Federal Constitution relating to the Syariah court would not be amended, other laws might be changed.

Lim said the ministers requested for the meeting with Abdullah because they did not want the misunderstanding to worsen and that "Barisan Nasional leaders must not appear to be fighting with one another."

"The good thing about the Prime Minister is that when we asked for a discussion on a Saturday morning, he was prepared to make time for us to see him. That's why we are thank-

ful to the Prime Minister for it," he said.

Asked what motivated the ministers to send the memorandum, he said: "That is the discussion with the Prime Minister. I'm not at liberty to tell you."

On Umno Youth's criticism of their move to send the memorandum, he said: "We are not going to respond to that."

"We only listen to the voice of the Prime Minister."