

Abdullah: Be realistic about pay rise quantum

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■ **By Deborah Loh**
news@nst.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: Civil servants will get a pay rise but must be "realistic" about the quantum, the prime minister said yesterday.

The government has yet to finalise the amount of increase as there were various factors to consider, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said after chairing a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Appointments and Salary for the Public Sector.

"I'm sure you will want to know whether any decision has been made. Well, we have not made any decision yet as we are considering various options.

"We have to bear in mind at all times that we have to be realistic," he said after the meeting.

The committee discussed factors such as civil servants' performance and productivity and their appropriate reward.

It also discussed technical issues related to the salary increase, which Abdullah said would be announced soon.

Asked if a decision would be made in time for the civil servants' gathering with the prime minister on May 21, Abdullah said: "It depends. The discussion is still going on."

The committee meets twice a year and yesterday was the first meeting for this year.

Other committee members present were Second Finance Minister Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop, Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, Chief Secretary to the Govern-

ment Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan, Treasury secretary-general Datuk Dr Wan Abdul Aziz Wan Abdullah and Public Service Department director-general Tan Sri Ismail Adam.

Cuepacs, the umbrella union of civil service associations, has requested a salary revision of between 10 and 40 per cent for all 1.1 million civil servants.

Abdullah on Monday confirmed that civil servants would be getting a pay rise.

On contractors who did shoddy work on government buildings, Abdullah said action would be taken against them, including making them pay for defects.

He was asked about the six-month study to be done by a committee of engineers headed by Auditor-General Tan Sri Ambrin

Buang on government buildings in Putrajaya.

Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu announced the committee's formation on Wednesday.

Samy Vellu had said that the cabinet agreed to let the committee conduct a RM22 million study on faults in government buildings. In the meantime, the cabinet would decide on the Public Works Department's proposal for it to take full control of monitoring and inspection of all government projects.

Abdullah had ordered an immediate check on government buildings following problems in the Immigration and Entrepreneur and Co-operative Development Ministry buildings in Putrajaya and, more recently, in the newly-opened Jalan Duta court complex.