

PM: Don't sell off licences and contracts

The Star - 3/12/2006

PENANG: Malay contractors and businessmen who have been given contracts and licences should stop relying on commissions, said Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

They should go directly into the projects instead.

Speaking at a closed-door meeting here yesterday, the Prime Minister called for an end to the culture of "selling off" contracts and licences given to the Malays.

Selling off opportunities would not benefit the community in the long run, he said at the inaugural state-level meeting of the Federation of Malay Economic Bodies (Gabem).

Abdullah expressed his con-

cern over the negative impact that could result from such a trend, Gabem national chairman Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik told reporters at the end of the meeting.

He added that the Prime Minister wanted the practice to stop as the Malays could find themselves at the losing end if it continued.

It was the first state-level meeting since the inception of Gabem on June 6. Selangor will hold the next state-level meeting this Friday.

Abdul Rahim said Abdullah wanted Gabem to check how the Malays conduct their business and to play matchmaker when a business turned stale

and needed to be revitalised.

Saying that Gabem would emphasise economic *jihād* (struggle), he added that this should not be misconstrued as an attempt to snatch away other people's rights.

"The term *jihād* is more into changing the Malay mindset so that they will be more dynamic and patriotic in the business world, as required in Islam," he said, adding that business was one of the most honourable professions.

Abdul Rahim said Gabem comprises contractors, businessmen, senior government officers, among others, who would be looking at the delivery system from bottom up.