

 Mon, May 4 2009 - KUALA LUMPUR: There has been no response from the Prime Minister or his government to Suhakam's letters outlining the need to make it compliant with the Paris Principles or face losing its 'A' status. They have also missed the 28-day deadline, which ended yesterday, given by the United Nations (UN) to challenge the observations of the Accreditation Sub-Committee of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (ICC). Last month, The Star reported that Suhakam had written to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak that the sub-committee was not satisfied with the Suhakam (Amendment) Bill 2009, which was supposed to have been the Government's attempt to make the Suhakam Act compliant with the Paris Principles. Yesterday, Suhakam chairman Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman told The Star that Suhakam had written to de facto Law Minister Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz early last week at his behest but had got no response either. Suhakam commissioner Datuk (SK) Choo and some others met Nazri and the parliamentary Human Rights Caucus a few weeks back and discussed the Suhakam Bill. The minister was very understanding and sympathetic to our concerns about the Bill and the report of the Accreditation sub-committee. He said he would take the matter up with the Cabinet and asked us to write a letter, which we did. We have not heard from him and neither were we able to find out whether the Cabinet had discussed the matter last week