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Call to government employees to speed up service to public

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CHIEF Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali yesterday urged civil servants and government officials to speed up service to the public to assist in efforts to help the country's economy recover.

He called on civil servants to adhere to their respective departments and agencies clients' charter when delivering services to the public.

"If the target in the clients' charter is not realistic, it is necessary for them to revise it ... for the public interest," he told a news conference at the release of the Public Complaints Bureau (PCB) Annual Report 1997 in Kuala Lumpur.

Abdul Halim said 66.3 per cent of the 3,697 public complaints against the government administration last year were on delays in delivering services to the public.

He said there should no longer be any delays in the provision of services to the public as all government agencies and departments have their own clients' charter.

He said the Home Ministry received the most public complaints regarding delays in the registration and immigration processes.

On action taken to alleviate the problems, Abdul Halim said the Government has taken disciplinary action against negligent officials and those who disregard the client charter.

Some officials have been given warning for delaying services to the public, he added.

At the same time, he said, steps are being taken to improve the system.

According to PCB annual report 1997, out of the 3,697 public complaints received, 935 cases have been solved, 1,385 cases will be further investigated while 1,145 cases have received advisory services.

For complaints against the state governments, Johor registered the most complaints with 104 cases, followed by Selangor (81) and Perak (70).

On the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's call for the civil servants to reduce red tape in Government administration, Abdul Halim said it is part of the steps taken to improve the public sector's service.

If such problems occur, he said the Government will investigate the matter immediately, take appropriate action and change procedures if necessary.

"It is an on-going exercise ... the directive was given some time ago to all government agencies to speed up approval on all works including development and construction plans," he said.

Abdul Halim also said he has not received any report on the proposal to revise the interest rate of government housing loans for civil servants.

"If there is any revision, it would be handled by the Treasury," he said when asked to confirm whether the Government is revising the housing loan rate.

He added that the 4 per cent interest rate would remain for now.

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