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`Implement projects by Aug 31'

Noor Adzman Baharuddin

NIBONG TEBAL, Sun. - Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today directed government agencies and departments to implement by Aug 31 all approved small and medium-scale projects meant to improve the people's quality of life.

Dissatisfied that some of the projects had not even begun although allocations had been approved early this year, he said he would bring the matter up at the Cabinet meeting this week.

"I will go down to the ground and deal with the matter personally if the projects are not implemented immediately," he said at a gathering attended by about 1,000 villagers in Kampung Sungai Chenaam, about 10km from here. Also present were Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon and Sungai Acheh Assemblyman Datuk Abdul Rashid Abdullah.

The projects which Anwar wants implemented by Aug 31 are those costing between RM20,000 and RM100,000 each. They include road and drain repair and improvement works in villages.

Other projects which had been delayed, he said, included improving facilities in schools and mosques in rural areas.

"(Prime Minister) Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has asked me to look into this matter to alleviate the people's hardship during the current economic situation," he said.

"We have approved the allocations and any project which has yet to get off the ground should start on the fast track immediately. I will bring this matter up at the Cabinet meeting this week."

Anwar said the Public Works Department had yet to carry out some medium-scale projects for the people.

The Deputy Prime Minister said he had directed district officers and State PWD directors to prepare a report on the matter and to start implementing them.

"I will also ask the Treasury and the Implementation and Co-ordination Unit to look into the problems."

The respective State development officers and State Governments, he said, should co-ordinate to ensure the implementation of the projects without delay.

During the visit, Anwar released about 20,000 prawn fry into 24 ponds run by the Kampung Sungai Chenaam Area Farmers' Organisation.

He also met about 100 hardcore poor families in the area.

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