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## NEAC wants fortnightly progress reports on projects

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THE National Economic Action Council (NEAC) has asked for fortnightly progress reports on all development projects to ensure that economic recovery continues unimpeded, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

He said ministries, government agencies and departments now have to submit progress reports on projects under their jurisdiction to the Implementation and Coordination Unit of the Prime Minister's Department every two weeks.

"We want to ensure that whatever has been decided on is quickly implemented. Bureaucratic delays must be put aside," Abdullah said to reporters after launching the information technology (IT) centre and homepage of the Putra Permai township in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Even though the NEAC is satisfied with the progress so far, it wants to see more improvement.

"This is a new directive so that they will work harder," he added. Abdullah said the Government's seriousness in dealing with the economic crisis can be seen from the almost daily meetings of the NEAC, chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. He said the council meets from 9am to 11am on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The weekly Cabinet meeting is held on Wednesdays.

"If there are any problem regarding policy implementation, we take action as soon as possible to fix them. We also have forward planning to speed up recovery and economic growth. This is a high political commitment, and I believe with the support of the people we will see these efforts bear fruit faster," Abdullah said.

He said the NEAC yesterday spent considerable time discussing low- and medium-cost housing.

Abdullah said the Government recently provided an additional allocation of RM600 million for public low-cost housing programmes. About 35,000 units will be built for squatter relocation, while another 15,000 units will meet the demand for housing from the rural poor.

"For this low-cost housing category, 90,032 units or 45 per cent of the target has been completed. Of this total, 26,774 units or 44.6 per cent were built by the public sector," he added.

Abdullah said the setting up of Syarikat Perumahan Negara Bhd (SPNB) in 1997 with a capital of RM2 billion is expected to speed up development of houses costing RM150,000 and below.

He said as at October 1998, SPNB has approved RM733 million in bridging loans to build 50,725 units of houses comprising 13,644 low-cost houses, 13,482 units of low-medium cost houses and 35,599 medium-cost houses. Putra Permai, which consists of 1,500 low- and medium-cost houses, is developed by Taman Equine (M) Sdn Bhd. The developer is putting up IT centres for each of the four blocks of apartments. Each IT centre will be equipped with 10 computers donated by Compaq Computers (M) Sdn Bhd.

"I applaud the developers who have today taken this innovative step in providing IT centres. It is a step for the future made today. IT is not for the rich alone. Neither is IT for the working man only. IT is for the masses," Abdullah said.

Touching on the Anti-Mosquito and National Cleanliness campaign, Abdullah said he is not satisfied with public awareness towards the

campaign since he launched it nine days ago.

"We must remember that cleanliness in the residential areas we live in requires the cooperation of everyone, not just the local authority. I would suggest that one day every month be set aside where the residents clean up their area together," he said.

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