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Yet to receive RM150 million, says Sabbaruddin

TEMERLOH, Sun. - The Culture, Arts and Tourism Ministry has yet to receive the RM150 million allocation to carry out promotional activities for this year.

Its Minister Datuk Seri Sabbaruddin Chik said today it was already May and the Ministry had not received a single sen.

"So, we cannot immediately spend the allocation," he told reporters after attending a "Meet-the-People" session organised by Temerloh Umno in Kampung Bukit Kemuning, here.

"Like what has been said by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, this is not a fault-finding mission.

"It is the system that has to be improved from time to time," he said.

As for development allocation for his Ministry, Sabbaruddin who is also Temerloh Umno chief and Temerloh MP said it was mainly for small projects.

"For example, we give some money to States to build toilets," he said.

He admitted that like some other ministries, the spending was normally slow in the first two or three months of the year.

"We have the funds but sometimes there is no land for the projects," he said. "Once the projects take off the ground, the implementation can be very fast."

Sabbaruddin said there was also a need to review the method disbursing allocations.

"Sometimes when we have exhausted our allocations for certain projects, we need extra money and this will need the approval of the Treasury. So, we will have to go through the same process over and over again," he said.

He added that part of the development allocation received by his Ministry was an extension to projects carried over from last year.

"Work on the National Art Gallery, for example, is being carried out for two years. Some of the allocation was received last year and the balance this year."

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