

18 JUL 2000

Pandikar-Contractors

GOVT WILL CONSIDER VALID REASONS FOR PROJECT FAILURES - PANDIKAR AMIN

KUANTAN, July 18 (Bernama) -- The government will give due consideration to contractors' valid reasons for failure to complete projects within the specified time, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Pandikar Amin Mulia said today.

He said the government would not indiscriminately withdraw the contracts but through established procedures such as holding discussions with the contractors on the problems they faced.

"If the reasons given are unacceptable, the contractors are negligent, no serious effort on their part to overcome their problems, only then the government will decide to withdraw the contracts to be given to others," he told reporters here today.

He was speaking to reporters after visiting three projects financed by the Prime Minister's Department. The projects are Sultan Ahmad Shah Pahang Islamic College Mosque, quarters for policemen at the Kuantan police station and the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) personnel.

Citing a case, Amin said the government had to finally withdraw the contract to build a courthouse in Labuan after discussions with the contractor showed he was not keen to proceed and did not have the expertise to carry out the project.

Asked on the Kuantan police housing project which had been deferred twice, he said the contractors' reasons need to be taken into account as the country was hit by the economic downturn two years ago.

"We do not want to blame everything on the contractors. We also have to see whether the delays are caused by the attitude of certain government officers who strictly go by the book which should not be the case," he said.

Amin said discretion must be used to ensure cooperation with the private sector to develop the country.

He said the cooperation between the government and private sector had been going on smoothly thus far.

On his visit, he said it was in line with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's directive to ministers to monitor the progress of government projects by making site visits and not merely rely on reports.

-- BERNAMA

SHS TS