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Building sector welcomes RM4.3b package

PETALING JAYA, Wed: The RM4.3 billion stimulus package unveiled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday to counter the global economic slowdown will ensure more work for contractors and the building materials sector.

Master Builders Association Malaysia president Lai Moo Chan said today the announcement reflected the government's sincerity in wanting to generate more economic activities to contain the effects of the economic slowdown.

He said the injection of critically-needed funds and steps taken to enhance efficiency of project implementation will provide the impetus to expedite projects and alleviate cash flow problems faced by the sector.

Malay Traders and Entrepreneurs Association (Perdasama) president Datuk Moehamad Izat Emir urged bumiputra traders and entrepreneurs to seize the opportunities available from the stimulus package.

He said the temporary RM500 a month allowance for 10,000 degree and diploma holders to study IT, mathematics and language will increase the society's proficiency in the science and technology field.

The RM150 million for retraining of retrenched workers will also increase workers' skills and provide them with training according to market demand.

Malaysian Trades Union Congress president Zainal Rampak said the RM80 million annual allocation to double the welfare payment rate for the hardcore poor is in line with the caring society concept.

"We also laud the allocation of RM150 million for the training of retrenched workers, and monthly allowance of RM500 to 10,000 diploma and degree holders to learn information technology," he said.

He urged the Human Resources Ministry to provide information on jobs available by setting up employment exchanges in the major towns.