

PM: We hope to spend all this year

Nov 17 NOV 2001

THE Government is confident of fully utilising its two fiscal stimulus packages valued at RM7.3 billion by the end of the year.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said this was possible because all the projects had been identified and their fundings approved.

"We have approved all the projects... they are simple projects (like) tarring of roads, repairing bridges and schools and painting.

"We hope to spend everything... we have other provisions for next year," he said after handing over keys and land titles of bungalows and double-storey terrace houses to 147 Orang Asli families in Daman-sara Perdana, Petaling Jaya, yesterday.

In September, the Government announced a RM4.3 billion stimulus package, in addition to the RM3 billion introduced in March, to cushion the impact of an imminent global economic slowdown.

"We still have money (for next year)... there are many companies making profits in excess of RM1 billion lately according to (recent) newspaper reports.

"If they make profits, we will derive the benefits too, in the form of corporate tax... So, better pray that all of them make a lot of money," added Dr Mahathir, who is also the Finance Minister.

Earlier this month, Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER) executive director Dr Mohamed Ariff said the second fiscal stimulus package of RM4.3 billion had worked better than the previous RM3 billion.

MIER had forecast a 0.3 per cent marginal growth for the country this year.