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Shafie-Tax

CALL FOR "NATIONAL HEROES" TAG ON TAXPAYERS

PENANG, Sept 26 (Bernama) -- The Finance Ministry today called for those who paid the highest amount of taxes be made "national heroes" in recognition of their contribution to the nation's development.

Its Deputy Minister Datuk Dr Shafie Mohd Salleh hoped that the suggestion was considered by the Inland Revenue Board (IRB) as it would encourage taxpayers to meet their obligation.

He said at one time, companies which paid the highest amount of taxes were given the honour of participating in the National Day Parade.

Speaking to reporters after opening a tax conference here, Dr Shafie said taxpayers should feel proud as their contribution was used by the government to build infrastructure and boost the economy.

He said in several countries, taxpayers were given due recognition for carrying out their duty and this should also be done in the country.

He also urged taxation agents to provide awareness on the importance of paying taxes on their private sector clients.

Dr Shafie said last year, the number of registered taxpayers in the country was only 16 per cent out of its population.

He said direct taxes collected by the IRB last year was RM29.16 billion with 48 per cent coming from companies, 24 per cent from individuals and the rest from other sectors.

In another development, Dr Shafie said the ministry would ensure that contractors were promptly paid after completion of projects which they undertook.

He said this was to enable the construction sector to progress apart from keeping in step with the nation's economic cycle.

He said the ministry would also ensure that payment from the principal contractor to the sub-contractors were on time to enable development projects to progress smoothly.

Dr Shafie was commenting on yesterday's announcement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the government would immediately implement a RM4.3 billion economic stimulus package to cushion the imminent global economic slowdown following recent events in the United States.

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