

16 NOV 2001

MAHATHIR-STIMULUS

MAHATHIR: RM7.3 BLN STIMULUS PACKAGE TO BE SPENT BY END 2001

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad says the entire stimulus package totalling RM7.3 billion will be spent by the end of the year.

He said the allocation would not be spill over to next year as the government would have other allocations for 2002.

Responding to a question that only a small portion of the funds in the fiscal stimulus package had been spent, Dr Mahathir said there was still some more time to spend them.

"At first, it is slow but eventually it will pick up by the end of the year," he told reporters after handing over keys of bungalow lots to Orang Asli headmen at Bukit Lanjan here today.

The government had introduced a fiscal stimulus package of RM3.0 billion in the first quarter of this year in the midst of a sluggish global economy and an additional package of RM4.3 billion in the aftermath of the Sept 11 attacks in the United States.

Dr Mahathir said all the projects covered by the stimulus package had already been approved.

Earlier in his address at the key handing ceremony, Dr Mahathir had agreed for the settlement in Bukit Lanjan to be named "Desa Temuan Bukit Lanjan" while that in Sungai Buloh as "Desa Riang".

He also lauded the efforts by developer, the Emkay Group, for building houses and infrastructure at the Bukit Lanjan Orang Asli settlement, and that this should be emulated by other developers.

He said developers should not only think of big profits but should be aware of their social obligations towards society.

"If we have the feeling of being considerate to the less fortunate, there will be peace and progress in society," he added.

In a statement today, Emkay said the project for the development of the former Orang Asli Reserve Land in Bukit Lanjan and Sungai Buloh covered 322.44 hectares, of which 276.44 ha had been alienated in 1995 to its subsidiary, Saujana Triangle Sdn Bhd for mixed development.

The Selangor state government has approved the allocation of RM60.9 million for the development of houses and facilities for the Orang Asli Community in Bukit Lanjan while another RM7.9 million was set aside for an Education Fund for the Bukit Lanjan Orang Asli's children.

All these funds form part of the contribution to be paid by the Emkay Group in return for the land alienated for development. -- BERNAMA

SHO KTC