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Fong-Budget

MINISTRY CUTTING RED TAPE TO EXPEDITE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

PUTRAJAYA, Jan 8 (Bernama) -- The Human Resources Ministry has directed its officers to reduce bureaucracy and expedite implementation of their development projects to ensure that allocations are fully utilised by year end.

"We have spent about 72 per cent of our allocation, but that is still unsatisfactory. So this year we have directed our officers to look at ways and means in which we can cut down red tape and fully spend our allocation," he told reporters here today.

Dr Fong was asked whether his ministry also faced difficulty in spending its development allocations in the wake of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's disclosure yesterday that only 87 per cent of the government's development budget was utilised.

When addressing the third civil service premier assembly yesterday, Dr Mahathir said that of the RM28.84 billion allocated for last year's development projects, RM3.8 billion remained unspent.

As for the major cause of his ministry's unspent development budget, Dr Fong attributed it to delays in selecting contractors and in getting projects off-the ground.

"But this year we will start (spending the budget) from the beginning (of the year)," he said.

He also welcomed Dr Mahathir's proposal for a two-year budgeting system which Dr Fong said would give ministries longer time to plan and complete their projects.

"I mean right from now we can begin to plan the implementation of the projects for the year 2003 and when the year 2003 comes we are ready for implementation," Dr Fong added.

-- BERNAMA

NM AHH RYN