

01/06/2005

Abdullah-Houses

GOVERNMENT TO BUILD MORE HOUSES TO REVITALISE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 1 (Bernama) -- The government will build more housing units for civil servants and personnel of the police and armed forces as a means to revitalise the badly hit construction sector in the country, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

He said the number of units to be built had not been determined as this would depend on the needs of various departments and the police and armed forces.

"The units will be built and rented to government employees, and we will build lots of units," he told reporters after chairing a meeting of the Umno Supreme Council at Putra World Trade Centre here today.

Abdullah, who is the Umno president, hoped this measure would be able to revitalise the construction sector which was contracting despite an expanding economy.

He also said he briefed the council on the Cabinet's decision in principle to introduce a five-day work week for public employees and reinstate the cost of living allowance.

In announcing the decisions early this week, he had said he agreed with the view of Cuepacs that a shorter work week would enable government employees to spend more time with their families and also boost domestic tourism.

On the fight against corruption, Abdullah reiterated that it remained a priority of his administration and he would continue with the efforts made under former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Asked to comment on a recent statement by Dr Mahathir regarding the methods he used to stamp out corruption, Abdullah said: "What Tun Mahathir mentioned was a reminder that he had also fought against corruption during his time. This action would be continued.

"Tun Mahathir himself has given his view, and there is no need to raise what has passed," he said.

Abdullah said the government had always gone all-out to wipe out corruption and it took many measures including giving a bigger allocation to the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) to increase its efficiency.

"We also accepted the ACA's recommendation to form a unit manned by accountants and auditors," he said.

He said the government also established the Integrity Institute of Malaysia which would make government employees aware of the evils of corruption and to steer clear of it.

The government took proactive steps to cut bureaucratic red tape in departments so as to shorten the waiting time for people applying for projects and reduce the temptation to resort to corruption, he said.

He said the government also created the Royal Commission to recommend ways to curb corruption in the police force, and a committee headed by him had been formed to implement the commission's recommendations.

"I am convinced that the measures taken would reduce the incidence of corruption in the government," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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