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Carry out stimulus package without delay

THE recently-introduced RM7.3 billion economic stimulus package should be implemented quickly since a delay in doing so will hinder efforts to spur the nation's economy to greater heights.

Wanita Umno delegate Raja Ropiaah Raja Abdullah, when tabling the motion on economy, said the "delay syndrome", if left unchecked, would also have a negative impact on the Government, especially as it prepares for the next general election.

She said the economic package had been well planned for the people and nation to benefit from it, and should not be postponed by red tape.

"We must remember that the general election is near and all promises must be honoured.

"Sometimes we hear complaints from the people over the numerous announcements (programmes) by the Government as their implementation is delayed.

"And those who have to bear with the grievances are the elected people's representatives and community leaders," said Raja Ropiaah, who is also Petaling Jaya Utara Umno division Wanita chairman.

She said the package was also able to counter the negative effects of the US-led invasion of Iraq and the scourge of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome on the nation's economy.

On the micro-credit scheme, introduced under the package, she said it was capable of eliminating loan sharks.

"This scheme, which provides RM800m in funds, also serves as a booster to women entrepreneurs to manage their business activities."

Raja Ropiaah also said Wanita Umno was grateful to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for bringing about economic achievement among the people, including the creation of six Malay entrepreneurs who are among the 20 richest people in the country.

"This was only possible due to Dr Mahathir's planning and policies, which are aimed at boosting the lot of the Malays.

"Dr Mahathir is our hero and we cannot be complacent but prepare ourselves to be more resilient and to excel in all economic fields," she said.

Raja Ropiaah said Wanita Umno also thanked the Barisan Nasional Government for its success in overcoming the economic slowdown through its pro-growth policies.

"We are confident the package will help us achieve a 4.5 per cent growth for the nation this year."