

12/06/2003

Cut red tape, PM urges States

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today directed all State Governments to cut bureaucratic red tape to facilitate speedy approval of all planned projects.

The Prime Minister wanted action to be taken quickly as this would encourage the private sector to invest and stimulate the economy, and simultaneously spur development that would benefit the people.

He sought the co-operation of State Governments to help make all plans under the recently announced RM7.3 billion economic stimulus package a success as this would enable people from all levels of society to reap the benefits.

Dr Mahathir also advised all parties not to be disheartened if the allocation approved by the Federal Government was lower than the requested sum.

He urged them to keep tabs on the implementation of all projects.

The directive was made by Dr Mahathir at a three-hour meeting with Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers in Putrajaya which ended at 6pm. Also present was Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and several Cabinet Ministers. The last meeting was on Jan 14.

When contacted, several Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers said the Prime Minister expressed dissatisfaction over delays in giving approvals including that for land ownership transfers, certificates of fitness, building plans and law enforcement.

Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam said the directive to cut bureaucratic red tape was made to enable the smooth implementation of projects.

"For instance, if the private sector has invested in a project, the Prime Minister wants approvals to be hastened. This includes land ownership transfers and building plans."

He added that water supply problems were also discussed as some State Governments had problems with supply and this issue would continue to be discussed in future meetings.

He said Dr Mahathir also wanted State Governments to spend wisely where important projects were concerned because allocation was limited. The Prime Minister, Ali said, also requested State Governments to monitor the projects undertaken.

"Dr Mahathir also commented on CF delays. CFs are supposed to be issued within two weeks if everything is in order."

Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim said Dr Mahathir felt some projects ought to be postponed and these would be identified by the relevant ministries.

He said the Prime Minister wanted the people to benefit from the economic stimulus package and urged all State Governments to implement all planned projects.

"The Prime Minister said Malaysia was doing fine even though the world economy was experiencing a downturn. In this regard, he wanted all State Governments to help stimulate the economy and enhance the 'one village, one product' programme.

"Dr Mahathir also wants efficient enforcement of existing laws."

Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob said the Prime Minister stressed that all CF approvals be hastened. Dr Mahathir, he said, expressed concern that in some cases there were delays which dragged on

for years.

"In Pahang, we do not have this problem because it is always discussed during Exco meetings."

On the economic stimulus package, Adnan said Dr Mahathir advised all State Governments to spend within their means.

He said that it would be unlikely for the Federal Government to increase building expenditure if taxes were decreased.

Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali said the Perak Government would expedite the approval of CFs as directed by the Prime Minister.