

## **PM tells civil servants to 'think out of the box'**

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has called on civil servants to "think out of the box" and give him "solutions" to help up productivity levels in government in the face of economic hard times.

Speaking during his Prime Minister's Department's monthly assembly meeting this morning, he urged civil servants to optimise their spending amid the challenges caused by plunging world oil prices according to reports by the New Straits Times (NST) and Bernama today,

"Optimising expenditure does not mean austerity measures such as making cuts here and there, but ensuring that every ringgit is stretched to its fullest in benefit and effectiveness.

"Aside from that, we can also increase our efforts, which do not entail merely working hard but using our minds to think creatively and innovatively to improve productivity.

"As I have always stressed, give me a solution," he said.

Also present were ministers and deputy ministers in the prime minister's department, chief secretary to the government Ali Hamsa and Public Service Department director general Mohamad Zabidi Zainal.

### **Najib to head ICU**

During the meeting, the prime minister announced he will head a small group to look into optimising government projects.

The unit set up with Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Ali aims to resolve the issue of delayed projects.

This follows a revision of his Budget 2016 announced last Friday in the face of the economic downturn.

"We will call the agencies or ministries concerned to find out what caused the projects to be delayed.

"We will see whether the delays had to do with processes or complications.

"I want the implementation coordination unit (ICU) as the secretariat to identify certain areas that could be given emphasis," he said.

## **'Let's move on'**

He also called to mind the 'People First, Performance Now' and 'people's economy' agenda.

He said while the people do comprehend that the current economic situation is dictated by external forces, they are also hopeful that every government project and programme would still be implemented.

"Let's move on. We have a big agenda, for the country and people and for our mutual well-being.

"As for sensitive issues, we will find a solution. We cannot let them remain like a thorn in the flesh that could lead to problems in terms of our security and relationship with one another," he said.

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