

Troubled Shah Alam hospital faces two-year delay
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The construction of the Shah Alam Hospital, scheduled for completion in November 2011, will be further delayed and expected to drag on for at least another 30 months, said the Works Ministry today.

shaziman abu mansor Minister Shaziman Abu Mansor (right) admitted in the Dewan Rakyat that only after the Public Works Department (PWD) had completed the re-tendering of the project, could construction go on.

The PWD had terminated the services of Sunshine Fleet Sdn Bhd as the main contractor of the project on Sept 3, as it had fallen considerably behind schedule.

Shaziman added that although the main subcontractor has been performing well and had offered to finish the job within 18 months, the PWD had to undertake the tender process to avoid being accused of favouring anyone.

He said this in response to Khalid Samad (PAS-Shah Alam), who wanted to know the status of the hospital's construction and if a new contractor had been appointed through direct negotiations to replace Sunshine Fleet.

Shaziman explained that construction was 62 days behind schedule and there had been no activity on the ground since August.

"At the date of the contract was ended the work progress of work only at 27 percent instead of the projected 38.9 percent."

He added a total of RM139.9 million had been paid.

PWD should take over

In a supplementary question, Khalid demanded to know if there was a clause in the contract that would allow the PWD to take over the construction and rehire the subcontractor, whom Shaziman had claimed "had done a 100 percent good job".

It is understood that the former main subcontractor, GMH Sdn Bhd, as well as several other subcontractors connected to the project, whose services had recently been terminated by Sunshine Fleet, had offered to continue as the new contractors.

Shaziman, however, retorted that if the PWD was to simply give out the project to the subcontractor without tender, he would be accused of "having links" with the company.

"When they (contractors) took on the project, they agreed to all the conditions including time of completion and the price. They promised the stars and the moon," he said rather annoyed.

"In reality, after one or one and half years into the construction, they will come up with excuses that the prices they agreed upon are not workable, the design cannot be done and so on," said Shaziman.

At a press conference at the Parliament lobby later, Khalid said that the delay is causing suffering and could cost lives.

"I visited a lady at the Klang hospital who was supposed to have her big toe removed for gangrene but because the operation theatre was full, she (could not be attended to and) lost three toes," he said.

"That's why I suggested that the PWD take over the project directly and use the contractors who were performing their duties, to minimise further delays," said Khalid.

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