

RM67 bil stimulus packages making impact, says PM
Malaysiakini.com
Sep 21, 2009

The government's two stimulus packages are on track and beginning to have a positive impact on the economy, said Prime Minister Najib Razak.

The economic packages totalling RM67 billion, unveiled in November 2008 and March this year, have created jobs and income for small contractors, even for those in remote areas, Najib said in a statement today.

The construction sector grew 2.8 percent in the second quarter, higher than the 1.1 percent registered in the first quarter, he said in delivering an update on the results of the stimulus boost.

Najib also directed all ministries and agencies to implement and complete projects identified under the first RM6 billion package this year.

"To date, a total of 83,939 projects have been awarded, of which 53,076 projects valued at RM6.07 billion under the first stimulus package and the remainder under the second package which is designed to cover a period of two years," he said.

"This means that in 10 months, since the unveiling of the first package, 90 percent of projects identified have been awarded and are in various stages of implementation," he added.

Construction was one of the biggest beneficiaries among several sectors that were given fund injections because of their strong impact on economic growth.

Najib said RM7.92 billion had been paid out to contractors for the completion of 41,176 projects under the first and second stimulus packages that were launched to counter the global economic meltdown triggered by the international financial crisis which hit export economies badly.

The finished projects included low-cost houses, infrastructure, schools, police stations and army quarters.

Najib said in keeping with the government's "people first" strategy, a total of 1,126 housing projects were built for the benefit of 5,630 households throughout the country.

Najib personally monitors stimulus packages

The prime minister personally monitors closely every aspect of the stimulus packages on a weekly basis.

"This hands-on approach is to ensure that the targets set out under the two stimulus packages are achieved," he said.

The government has also allocated RM1 billion for human capital development to maintain Malaysia's competitiveness and to enhance efficiency of the labour force, he added.

Implementation of the stimulus packages is supervised by several agencies, key of which is the Project Management Unit (PMU) whose chief operating officer Mohamad Othman Zainal

Azim reports directly to the prime minister.

A technical committee chaired by the Treasury secretary-general also reports to a steering committee chaired by Najib.

Amid the global turmoil, the government identified projects designed for high impact and high multiplier effect to reinforce the economy and strengthen national resilience.

Procedures were also streamlined to ensure speedy implementation.

- *Bernama*

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/113335>