

Speed up payments, PM inges civil servants

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PUTRAJAYA: Pay up fast when work has been done or supplies delivered, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi told civil servants yesterday.

"Don't dilly-dally. We don't want the unpaid bills to pile up," he said at the monthly assembly of the Prime Minister's Department.

Abdullah said delaying payments will create a domino effect, causing hardship for a lot of people, including the government and the economy.

"If the contractors or others have provided us services and supplies according to the contract, I don't see the need for us to delay

payment," he said.

"A promise according to the contract has been fulfilled and if work is already done, we should pay."

Abdullah was addressing a common problem of those who do business with the government - slow payment.

He had said this before and the fact that he was reiterating this showed that the payment process is still not up to the mark.

Saying Islam preaches one to keep one's promise, Abdullah commented that any delay in payment for work done will affect a lot of people, including the government and economy as it is all inter-linked.

He said if a contractor does not

get his payment on time, he will not be able to pay his employees, as well as his suppliers and this will create a lot of problems for everyone.

"If we keep on delaying, it will create anger among the people and make many people's lives miserable," he said.

Therefore, he reminded the central agencies like the Economic Planning Unit to ensure payments are released as soon as a job is done.

On another matter, the prime minister advised Muslims who are fasting not to be big spenders and waste food.

"Please try to spend within your means and please don't waste food when breaking fast," he said.