

DPM: Public wants action taken against developer

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PUTRAJAYA: The public does not want the Government to let the developer of the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) building off the hook for the delay in completing the project, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said.

Najib said public sentiment on the matter indicated that action should be taken against those concerned, including being taken to court.

"The Cabinet will discuss the matter at length during the next meeting on Wednesday. We know the public feels they (developer) should not be allowed to get away without any action taken against them.

"We hope to get the views and opinion of the Attorney-

General on this matter and to determine if there are any provisions in the law that we can use," he told reporters after chairing the Cabinet committee meeting on foreign workers at the Home Ministry yesterday.

The Works Ministry had said that it planned to bring former directors of Perangsang International Sdn Bhd (PISB) to court for the nine-year delay.

The delay had caused construction costs for the building to go up by 70%. Work on the building in Jalan Duta began in 1994 and was targeted for completion in 1997.

However, the keys to the building were handed over to the International Trade and Industry Ministry only on Tuesday.

Due to several delays and the appointment of a new contractor, the original cost of RM167mil ballooned to RM287.5mil with RM64.8mil spent on repairs.

PISB was a subsidiary company of Kumpulan Hartanah Selangor Sdn Bhd, an investment company of the Selangor government. The PISB contract was terminated last March and the company was ordered to pay late delivery charges amounting to RM95mil.

On Thursday, Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu disclosed that the Finance Ministry had chosen PISB for the project instead of the company recommended by the Works Department's tender committee.