

PM: Penalise jobbers who don't deliver

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KOTA BARU: Endorsing a recent warning by his works minister, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday contractors who do not complete their projects on time should have their services terminated.

The prime minister said this was to ensure there were no delays in projects planned by the government.

"I agree with the works minister's (Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu) warning that if contractors cannot complete their work on time, their services should be terminated.

"We want to ensure all projects are completed according to schedule," he said, when performing the ground-breaking ceremony for the second Sultan Yahya Petra bridge here.

Present were Samy Vellu, Higher Education Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed and Kelantan Umno liaison chief Datuk Seri Annuar Musa.

The second bridge will have four lanes, with two each on either side of the original bridge which was built in 1960.

It is expected to be completed in December 2009.

The 811m bridge is the main route for the residents of Tumpat, Pasir Mas and Rantau

Panjang to get to the town centre. Abdullah, who is on a two-day visit to Kelantan, said while he agreed that work must be done fast, it must also be done well.

"The work must be tidy and nice so that one or two years down the road we need not repair things that have broken down," he said, to applause from the 5,000-strong crowd.

Abdullah said an efficient and comprehensive transport network was important to ensure smooth running of the government's bigger agenda like developing the East Coast Corridor, which involves Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang.

Samy Vellu told reporters later the move to terminate the services of contractors who do not complete projects on time was a last resort by the government to avoid the wrath of the people.

"This is a new regulation. Some contractors ask for additional time of two months, four months, eight months, a year or two years and the people don't scold them. They scold us.

"Everyone is angry at me, even the cabinet ministers scold me," he said.

He said the ministry would impose a new regulation to fix

the percentage of work that needed to be completed monthly. It would also have more engineers to monitor the projects.

"There are many contracts that we cannot terminate immediately. We have to investigate, give them notice before acting," he said. - Bernama

Former
head of
charity
to be
extradited
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