

Money not for Umno division heads

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At the Dewan Rakyat

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KUALA LUMPUR: The government has denied it allocated RM3 million for each Umno division head to implement small-scale projects

in their areas. Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Dr Awang Adek Hussin said the RM3 million is part of the additional RM600 million allocated for development projects in parliamentary constituencies. "The projects have already been implemented," he said in

reply to a supplementary question from Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Ipoh Timur).

Lim had asked why there was a RM3 million allocation for every Umno division (parliamentary constituency) which, he said, was meant to enrich the respective Umno heads.

He also asked why the RM600 million was allocated without parliamentary approval.

The RM600 million allocation was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on the eve of last November's Umno annual general meeting and the money was disbursed by the Finance Ministry on Dec 22.

Awang Adek said the allocation was channelled to the Implementation Coordination Unit of the Prime Minister's Department and disbursed to the federal development departments and state development offices.

To an original question from Datuk Nasaruddin Hashim (BN-Parit) on payments to

contractors, Awang Adek said the new payment system, introduced last October, has reduced government arrears from RM2.7 billion last September to RM796 million within two months.

"Steps have also been taken to improve payment to contractors and through a Finance Ministry circular dated Oct 31, 2006. Any payment or claim must be processed and disbursed in 14 days," he said.

"We are also monitoring the payment schedule of bills submitted. Every ministry is required to submit a monthly report on the matter directly to the Treasury."

To a supplementary question from Datuk Abdul Ghapur Salleh (BN-Kalabakan), Awang Adek said the Treasury currently had 148 claims to settle, of which 141 would be paid within seven working days and the remaining within 14 days.

"However, there are still agencies which have failed to adhere to the 14-day period," he said.

