

Speed up land applications for projects, States told

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■ **By Deborah Loh**
news@nst.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: The Prime Minister wants applications for land for projects under the Ninth Malaysia Plan (9MP) to be processed quickly.

If necessary, he said, State Governments should set up special units to assess and approve the applications.

Menteris Besar must also be "facilitators" of the 9MP and monitor projects to ensure they were carried out with good and timely results.

Now that the first list of projects has been announced and with tender notices to be out within three months, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said State Governments, land offices and local authorities should complement the Federal Government's efforts by gearing up their administrations.

"It is very important to facilitate and make the process of land acquisition easier for the projects," he told reporters after chairing a meeting of Menteris Besar and Chief Ministers and the Federal Government.

"I want fast-track approval for all the land because without land the projects cannot move."

Abdullah briefed the meeting, the 100th in the series, on the first tranche of 880 projects worth

RM15 billion.

The meeting discussed various problems in the implementation of projects, such as delays in land acquisition.

"Although these are Federal projects, we need the State Government's co-operation to facilitate them. I stressed to these State leaders how important it is for their governments to act quickly and to give whatever approvals that are needed."

Asked about the glut of cars in the domestic market and its adverse impact on dealers, Abdullah, who also chairs the committee on the National Automotive Policy (NAP), said he had just received a letter from several parties on the matter and would study it.

Car dealers have complained of an excess of about 250,000 cars believed to be the result of credit tightening by lenders and lower prices as a result of the NAP.

With imported cars now cheaper, dealers especially those selling second-hand cars, say they will be hard hit.

Before the meeting, Abdullah launched a mini-exhibition on the history of meetings between Menteris Besar, Chief Ministers and the Federal Government.

The first meeting, then known as "The Conference of Federation Executives", was held on Nov 29, 1955.