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## Govt to pare down foreign labour force

by P PREM KUMAR

THE government is committed to reduce the dependency on the foreign labour force in the construction sector, Deputy Works Minister Datuk Rosnah Shirlin said.

She said the ministry is undertaking serious efforts, via various initiatives formulated by Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), to bring down foreign workers dependency in phases.

Up to May this year, Rosnah said there were 790,017 construction industry workers registered with CIDB, of which 16% or 126,217 were foreigners.

"This is only the official list registered with CIDB. But there are many foreign workers who are not registered yet," she told Dewan Negara yesterday.

The reduction in dependency will be based on the Construction Industry Master Plan for Malaysia 2006-2015, Industrial Building Systems (IBS)

Roadmap 2011-2015, Construction Industry Transformation Programme under the 11th Malaysia Plan 2016-2020.

For the long-term, Rosnah said CIDB is polishing the Malaysian Builders Academy (ABM) as a training ground and vocational training for industry personnel.

"As of now, there are six ABMs nationwide, where it is expected to churn 300,000 youths certified in the construction industry," she explained.

Previous Bank Negara Malaysia's Economic Reports have stated the issue of manpower remains as one of the most constrained challenges faced by the Malaysian construction industry as it relies too heavily on a large number of foreign labour workers.

Economic Report 2011/2012 stated total employment of foreign labour force was about 12.64 million while 768,800 were involved in the construction sector.