

ROADS

1979

KUALA LUMPUR, FEB. 17 (BERNAMA)—THE GOVERNMENT IS CARRYING OUT VARIOUS FEASIBILITY STUDIES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF INTER-URBAN TOLL ROADS BY PRIVATE CONSORTIA ON A PACKAGE DEAL BASIS, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID HERE TODAY.

"IT IS HOPED THAT WITH THIS ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO COME FORWARD TO FINANCE HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONS, THE LIMITATIONS TO THE ROAD BUILDING PROGRAMMES CAUSED BY ACCESS TO FUNDS BY THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE MINIMISED," HE ADDED.

OPENING THE SYMPOSIUM ON NATIONAL HIGHWAY PROGRESS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID SUCH ROADS WOULD BE INITIALLY ALONG THE WEST COAST OF PENINSULAR MALAYSIA.

PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONSORTIA FOR THE FIRST PACKAGE OF 34 MILES OF A FOUR-LANE HIGHWAY FROM CHANGKAT JERING TO IPOH IN PERAK WAS IN PROGRESS.

THE INTEREST SHOWN BY BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES IN THE HIGHWAY PACKAGE DEAL PROJECT HAD BEEN VERY GOOD, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID.

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ROADS 2 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID ONE OF THE ESSENTIAL KEYS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WAS A GOOD AND EFFICIENT ROAD SYSTEM.

IN A COUNTRY LIKE MALAYSIA, THE ECONOMY WAS VERY SENSITIVE TO ROAD INVESTMENTS AS ANY INADEQUACY IN EXPENDITURE ON ROADS COULD DELAY OR CURTAIL THE PLANNED ACHIEVEMENTS OF OTHER DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENTS AND IN TURN HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE ECONOMY.

HE SAID THAT UNDER THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE HAD AGAIN BEEN GIVEN A CONTINUING AND IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION.

THE PLAN'S ORIGINAL PROGRAMME FOR ROADS IN THE RURAL AREAS WAS \$107 MILLION BUT THIS WAS INCREASED TO \$457 MILLION IN 1977 UNDER THE GOVERNMENT'S ACCELERATED RURAL ROADS PROGRAMME.

THIS HAD BROUGHT THE TOTAL PLANNED EXPENDITURE ON ROADS FOR THE PLAN PERIOD 1976 TO 1980 TO \$1,340 MILLION.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HOPED THAT THE SYMPOSIUM WOULD ALSO LOOK INTO THE PROBLEMS POSED BY CONSTRAINTS SUCH AS SHORTAGE OF SKILLED AND TECHNICAL MANPOWER, PARTICULARLY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.