

79 P
 KUCHING, MARCH 18 (BERNAMA)— THE GOVERNMENT IS TO GIVE A SERIOUS ATTENTION TOWARDS THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF SARAWAK'S POTENTIAL AS THE MAIN SOURCE OF HYDRO-ELECTRICITY SUPPLY FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTRY.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD DISCLOSED HERE TODAY THAT A GERMAN CONSULTANT FIRM HAD BEEN COMMISSIONED TO UNDERTAKE A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE PROJECT.

HE TOLD BEWSMEN BEFORE RETURNING TO KUALA LUMPUR AFTER A VISIT HERE THAT THE STATE'S HYDRO-ELECTRICITY POTENTIAL, IF FULLY TAPPED, WOULD BE CAPABLE OF MEETING THE REQUIREMENT OF THE WHOLE OF JAPAN.

+THE PROBLEM, HOWEVER, IS HOW TO TRANSFER THE ENERGY TO PENINSULAR MALAYSIA,+ HE SAID. — BERNAMA MORE 1255/1B

CC

NO17: (F)

MAHATHIR-DEVELOPMENT 2 KUCHING

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD TO LOOK FOR OTHER SOURCE OF POWER IN VIEW OF THE RISING PRICE OF OIL.

SINCE THERE WAS NO INDICATION OF OIL PRICE GOING DOWN, IT WOULD MEAN THAT THE PRICE OF ELECTRICITY WOULD ALSO GO UP, HE STRESSED.

HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT AS THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED ELECTRICITY AS A NECESSITY FOR THE PEOPLE RATHER THAN A LUXURY, IT WOULD SEE TO IT THAT SARAWAK'S VAST HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER POTENTIAL WOULD BE FULLY EXPLOITED. — BERNAMA MORE 1259/A1

MAHATHIR - DEVELOPMENT 3 KUCHING

DURING HIS THREE-DAY STAY, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WAS BRIEFED ON THE VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS BEING CARRIED OUT IN THE STATE INCLUDING THE LNG PROJECT AT BINTULU IN THE FOURTH DIVISION.

HE SAID HE DID NOT FORSEE MUCH PROBLEMS ON THE LABOUR AND MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS FOR THE LNG PROJECT AS WELL AS FOR OTHER PROJECTS IN THE DIVISION.

THIS WAS BECAUSE THE QUESTION OF TRAINING FOR LOCAL PEOPLE IN THE VARIOUS NECESSARY SKILLS WAS BEING LOOK AFTER.

HE FELT THAT ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF FOREIGN LABOUR NEEDED TO BE IMPORTED WHILE OTHERS COULD BE BROUGHT EITHER FROM PENINSULAR MALAYSIA OR SABAH.

ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE RETURN OF MAS DC-10 FROM SYDNEY THIS MORNING, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS HAPPY WITH THE DEVELOPMENT.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WOULD LEAVE FOR JAKARTA AS HEAD OF THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION EARLY THIS WEEK FOR TALKS BETWEEN THE ASEAN AND AUSTRALIAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS ON AUSTRALIA'S CHIEF AIR FERE POLICY.

HE SAID ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS WOULD PRESENT A REASONABLE FORMULA TO THEIR AUSTRALIAN COUNTERPART WITH THE HOPE THAT IT WOULD BE ACCEPTED AS A FAIR DEALING. —BERNAMA MORE 1344/MD

NO22 (F)

MAHATHIR - DEVELOPMENT 4 KUCHING

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR AND DATIN SERI DR. SITI HASMAH WERE GIVEN A RED CARPET SEND OFF AT THE AIRPORT.

A LARGE GATHERING OF PEOPLE INCLUDING STATE MINISTERS AND SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND THEIR WIVES WERE AT THE AIRPORT TO SEE THEM OFF.

LEAVING ON THE SAME AIRCRAFT WERE THE SARAWAK CHIEF MINISTER, DATUK PATINGGI TAN SRI HAJI ABDUL RAHMAN YAKUB, AND THE FEDERAL MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT, TAN SRI ONG KEE HUI. —BERNAMA 1346/1