

MAHATHIR-BAKUN

SIBU, SEPT. 11 (BERNAMA) -- A SUM OF 912 MILLION HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE BAKUN HYDRO-ELECTRICITY PROJECT IN SARAWAK'S BELAGA DISTRICT IN THE SEVENTH DIVISION, DATUK SERI DA MAHATHIRMOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

HOWEVER, 'NO FINAL DECISION, HAD BEEN MADE ON THE PROJECT, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID,

HE SAID THAT IF IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE PROJECT SHOULD GO AHEAD, AND IF THE FINANCIAL SITUATION PERMITTED, ACTUAL WORK WAS EXPECTED TO COMMENCE IN 1986.

HE SAID THAT THE PROJECT, EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 1995, WAS CAPABLE OF GENERATING 2,400 MEGAWATTS OF ELECTRICITY, THE EQUIVALENT OF THE PRESENT TOTAL CAPACITY, IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA.

THE PROJECT COULD BECOME A MAJOR REVENUE EARNER FOR THE COUNTRY, HE SAID.

+WE MIGHT-SELL SOME OF THE POWER TO INDONESIA AND SINGAPORE,+ HE TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE END OF A THREE-DAY VISIT TO SARAWAK.

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HE SAID STUDIES SHOWED THAT THE BAKUN PROJECT SHOULD BE THE FIRST IN SARAWAK EVEN THOUGH THREE OTHER AREAS WHICH COULD GENERATE SOME ELECTRICITY HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED.

HE ADDED THAT-THE PROJECT WOULD BRING IMMENSE BENEFIT TO THE PEOPLE AS BESIDES EARNING FOREIGN EXCHANGE IT COULD ALSO PROVIDE CHEAP ELECTRICITY AND HELP ACCELERATE THE GROWTH OF INDUSTRY.

ON ROADS IN SARAWAK, HE SAID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD SOON IDENTIFY THOSE TO BE FEDERALIZED AND HE WAS QUITE SURE IT WOULD INCLUDE SOME OF THE MAJOR ONES.

HE SAID WORKS MINISTER DATUK S. SAMY VELLU WOULD BE VISITING THE STATE FOR THE PURPOSE.

IF NECESSARY, TOLL WOULD HAVE TO BE IMPOSED, HE ADDED.

+SABAH HAS ALREADY AGREED TO THE IMPOSITION OF TOLL AND SO HAS PENINSULAR MALAYSIA. IT WOULD SOUND VERY ODD IF WE DO NOT IMPOSE TOLL FAIRLY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY,+ HE SAID. -- MORE

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HE SAID THE SEALING OF THE TRUNK ROAD IN THE STATE DEPENDED ON THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.

THAT WAS WHY PROJECTS LIKE THE BAKUN PROJECT WAS IMPORTANT AS THE MONEY SAVED COULD BE USED FOR BUILDING ROADS, HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA