

Mahathir raps group who opposes projects

EST 22 AUG 1985

LUBOK ANTU (Sarawak), Wed.
— Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today criticised a group who opposed the Batang Ai hydro electric power and the proposed multi-billion ringgit Bakun hydro electric power projects.

In describing them as "irresponsible" people who were not concerned with the welfare of the people, he said they were out to deliberately create problems.

Speaking at the opening of the Batang Ai project, six kilometres from here, Dr Mahathir said the group concerned involved people who had already benefited from the development of the State.

The group claims to champion the cause of preserving the envir-

onment but its members are just bystanders passing comments from the comfort of their homes.

"It's easy for them to pass comments because they already have it all. There are people who want development and better infrastructure. People whose stomachs are empty and live in areas without roads and poor sanitation."

Dr Mahathir said with the Batang Ai hydro electric power project the people of Sarawak would benefit by having cheap electricity.

Cheap electricity will also boost the industrial sector.

He stressed that the natural resources of Malaysia must be for the nation as a whole.

He said in the case of oil and gas-rich Sarawak and Sabah, after royalties were paid to them, the major portion of the earnings was for the development of the nation as a whole.