

13 MAR 1996

Runway

SARAWAK GOVERNMENT TO EXTEND RUNWAY AT MULU AIRPORT

KUALA LUMPUR, March 13 (Bernama) -- The Cabinet has given the green light to the Sarawak government to resurface and extend the runway at the Mulu airport, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today.

He said the Treasury had approved a RM15 million budget for the extension of the runway by 350 metres.

The airport would have a 1,200-metre airstrip when the extension was completed, enabling 50-seater aircraft to land there, he told reporters at his office here.

Dr Ling said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had approved the Sarawak government's request to extend the runway last May.

He said the state government had been given full responsibility to implement the work as it had a better knowledge of the terrain surrounding the airport.

"The state government is familiar with the area and the respective state agencies involved in studying the project," he said.

Dr Ling said chartered airlines like Seaga Air, which was using a 50-seater aircraft, could include Mulu in their flights from Labuan and Layang-layang.

At present, the airport only served 19-seater aircraft.

The extension of the runway would help in efforts to boost tourism in Mulu, Dr Ling said, adding that a 1,000-room hotel was being built there to attract more tourists. --BERNAMA

ARA SK