

28 JUN 1997

TNB READY TO SUPPLY POWER TO SUMATERA VIA PROPOSED BRIDGE

By: Mohamed Zabidi Osman

MELAKA, June 28 (Bernama) -- Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) is prepared to supply electricity to Sumatera in Indonesia via a proposed bridge connecting Sumatera and Peninsular Malaysia, said its executive chairman, Dr Ahmad Tajuddin Ali.

He said the project to supply electricity would be part of the power supply inter-connection system between Asean countries.

Dr Ahmad Tajuddin said this today when asked to comment on a statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Datuk Mahathir that the proposed bridge would have facilities for a railway line, gas pipes and power cables.

Dr Mahathir said the proposed bridge would have multi-purpose functions to ensure that it brought benefits to the people of both countries and the proposal had received approval from the Indonesian government.

Dr Ahmad Tajuddin said studies on electricity supply among Asean countries was being carried out and the use of the proposed bridge for that purpose would be studied as well.

"If it is suitable, the proposed bridge will be included as one of the channels for the Asean power supply system," he told reporters after meeting Melaka chief minister Datuk Abu Zahar Isnin here.

He said a similar system was in use in Pulau Pinang where electricity from the mainland was supplied to the island.

Another way of transporting power was through undersea or submarine cables and one of the big projects to be using such a system would be the Bakun hydro-electric dam which would eventually supply power to Peninsular Malaysia from Sarawak upon its completion a few years from now.

TNB, he said, believed that power distribution via the proposed bridge for the Asean power inter-connection system was viable.

On the privatisation of the Sabah Electricity Board, he said it would be completed by the end of the year if all efforts on the matter went on smoothly.

He said TNB would undertake the management operations of SEB by placing its management teams during the transitional period.

Energy, telecommunications and posts minister Datuk Leo Moggie said yesterday that TNB would head a consortium to be formed for the privatisation of SEB which was presently facing a few problems in the supply of electricity in Sabah.

TNB will hold a 40 percent stake in the consortium with the balance to be held by three other parties.

On his meeting with Abu Zahar, Dr Ahmad Tajuddin said TNB had applied to the state government to develop its own land measuring about 4.0 ha at Jalan Kilang for a mixed development project.

The site is in a prime commercial area and is being used by TNB for a sub-station and its staff quarters. It will be developed by Tenaga Nasional Properties.

Dr Ahmad Tajuddin said TNB would allocate RM225 million for various projects in the state including new power distribution projects and enhancement of the existing distribution system next year.

This year, about RM230 million would be spent for the same purpose and they include projects for the Batu Berendam main sub-station and sub-stations in Jasin and Telok Mas. -- BERNAMA

MOZ SHY