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CHINA-SABAH

CHINA ASKS SABAH TO SPEED UP DECISION ON PAPER PROJECT

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 24 (Bernama) -- Chinese premier Zhu Rongji today called on Sabah for a speedy agreement on the implementation of a joint venture paper project in the state that is worth more than US\$1 billion in investment.

"I'm very anxious to see this project take off... to see the project being a success," he said during a question and answer session at a luncheon hosted by the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (NCCIM).

Zhu said the Sabah state government seemed to have some concerns about the project.

He also said China was conducting negotiations on a similar project in Thailand currently.

"If we do not agree on the proposal, we may have to pursue the project in Thailand," he added.

"I do not mean to use Thailand as a case to exert pressure. I'm anxious to see the project succeed," he said.

Zhu also reiterated that his visit here had been scheduled for quite some time and was not part of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's election campaign.

"Dr Mahathir didn't advise me to cancel my trip... as a result I'm here," he said. -- BERNAMA

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