28 JAN 1999
Koh-Expressway
KOH: JELUTONG EXPRESSWAY CONSTRUCTION TO START IN JUNE

    PULAU PINANG, Jan 28 (Bernama) -- Construction of the Jelutong
Expressway which will link Penang Bridge and Port Weld will start in June
this year after the eviction of the people affected by the project is
completed.
    Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said the more than RM300 million
project would definitely be carried out as it was planned and designed
since construction of the Penang Bridge in 1982.
    He said construction of the expressway was delayed for a few years due
to technical problems which warranted a review and also owing to the
economic downturn.
    The agreement to build the expressway was signed in April last year
witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, he said.
    The project contractor is now evicting the people from the project site
which is expected to be completed by middle of this year, he said when
commenting on press reports on the worsening traffic congestion on the
island.
    Dr Koh said the state government would organise a seminar on traffic
congestion conducted by a well-known consultant firm Halcrow Fox to discuss
on the traffic studies it carried out since last year.
    The one-day seminar on April 24 would be opened to the public and
non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to enable all parties to express
their views on the best ways to overcome traffic woes in the state.
    On another matter, Koh said toll rates at the Penang Bridge would not
be raised although the rates were due for a review last year.
    "I've objected to the increase in toll rates and have asked the bridge
operator to defer increasing the toll by two per cent," he said.
    Under the terms and conditions of the bridge privatisation, the
operator can review toll charges every five years and the first review was
due last year, he said.
    He said the federal government also agreed with the state government's
request not to raise the toll as the operator was making profits with more
vehicles using the bridge.
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