

27/11/1999

Taib tells how several large projects sabotaged

KOTA SAMARAHAN, Fri. - Former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim initially supported several large development projects in Sarawak but later sabotaged them, Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud said today.

He cited the multi-billion ringgit coastal road from Balingian in Sibu division to Kota Samarahan division (about 400km) and the proposed Bakun hydro-electric dam project as examples.

The projects were suspended in 1997 but revived earlier this year.

"In front of us, he (Anwar) pledged support for our development plans, but behind us, he went and cancelled it," he said.

"He has jeopardised the efforts of the State Government to improve the standard of living of the Malays who are the predominant community along the areas in which the coastal roads were supposed to be built," said Taib, who is also State BN chairman.

Taib, who is defending his Kota Samarahan seat, made this statement when presenting a cheque for RM300,000 for the construction of a mosque at Kampung Empila here today.

In the case of the Bakun project, Taib blamed Anwar for the suspension of the project during the economic crisis.

He said Anwar had never cared about the people of Ulu Rejang, who were suffering because of his actions.

"In front of the Prime Minister, Anwar supported all development projects in Sarawak which could benefit the nation.

"But behind Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, he criticised and cancelled these projects," he said.

Taib said he had never come across a minister like Anwar, who liked to play dirty and yet portrayed himself as a juara Melayu (champion of the Malays).

After all he had done, Anwar now had the cheek to ask the people of Sarawak to support him through Keadilan.

"Keadilan and the other opposition parties only appear during election time.

"They will disappear after the election is over ... after instigating the people because of frustration," he said.

(END)