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Osu-Poor

MORE PPRT ESTATES TO BE DEVELOPED IN SABAH

TAWAU, July 23 (Bernama) -- The Sabah government will set up several more estates under the Development Programme for the Very Poor (PPRT), Chief Minister Datuk Osu Sukam said today.

These estates would be developed in the districts of Nabawan, Pitas, Sugut and Kunak, he said at the launching of the Kalabakan PPRT estate, about 160km from here.

The PPRT estate project was part of the poverty eradication programme undertaken by the state government, he said.

The Kalabakan PPRT estate covers 6,070ha and an area of 500ha has been planted with oil palm since July last year.

Osu said the project was a joint venture between the state government and Borneo Samudera Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of state-owned Sawit Kinabalu Bhd.

Oil palm cultivation was expected to go full swing by the end of next year and harvesting should be done in 2003, he said.

The Kalabakan project is the second of its kind in the state after the 3,000ha PPRT estate in Bagahak, Lahad Datu, which was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last year.

Earlier, state Rural and Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Nasir Tun Sakaran said various measures had been taken to reduce the poverty rate in Sabah, including implementation of projects and extension of subsidies.

In Sabah, households with a monthly income below RM633 are classified as poor while those earning less than half that figure are considered hardcore poor.

Sabah was the fifth poorest state after Terengganu, Kelantan, Kedah and Perlis, he said.

-- BERNAMA

IL YBY