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Taib-Bonus

S'WAK TO CONSIDER HALF-MONTH BONUS TO STATE GOV'T STAFF

KUCHING, Sept 13 (Bernama) -- The state government is ready to consider giving an additional half-month bonus to its civil servants, which number more than 20,000, Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Seri Abdul Taib Mahmud said.

The bonus payment would be discussed in the coming state Cabinet meeting and "it's not hard to decide on it", he told reporters after launching the Sarawak Cycling Day 2003 at the Kuching Waterfront here today.

On July 17, Abdul Taib announced a half-month bonus to be paid before this year's Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration after a similar allocation was made for central government staff in the economic stimulus package unveiled in May.

The 2004 Budget, presented by Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday, also included a half-month bonus for some 950,000 civil servants.

The bonus, involving a RM400 million payout, would be implemented in stages starting next month.

Meanwhile, Abdul Taib said the state government would encourage cycling activities in Sarawak by isolating special lanes for bicycle in the cities.

Kuching would be the pioneer city of the project and the North Kuching City Hall and the South Kuching City Council had been instructed to identify those routes, he said.

"When the routes are identified, those interested can cycle along these roads during the weekends but every week the routes will be changed," he said.

He said the proposal for the special routes would be extended to the whole state if there was interest and support from cycling enthusiasts in the area, he said.

-- BERNAMA

RDY EMK