

S'wak gov't to meet PM over Bakun takeover
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The Sarawak government will meet Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak soon to finalise the sale of the Bakun hydro-electric project, Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud said today.

Taib, who is also state finance minister, said the 2,400 megawatt (MW) capacity-dam, is expected to generate 300MW of electricity by June next year, and has yet to be acquired by the state government.

"We will have a final meeting with the prime minister, who is also finance minister, to conclude the deal soon," he told reporters after opening the RM5.5 million Sarawak Foundry and Engineering Industries Association building and Automative and Welding Institute of Sarawak in Kuching.

The RM7.3 billion Bakun project is owned by Sarawak Hidro Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Ministry of Finance Incorporated, and 69,500 hectares will be flooded after the impoundment began on Oct 13.

On plans to build additional dams in future, Taib said Sarawak was targeting about 7,000MW in terms of electricity supply by 2020 by taking into consideration the socio-economic aspects of relocating locals affected by such hydro projects.

Based on the authorities' experience in handling the Bakun and Murum dam projects, the resettlement exercise itself posed problems due mainly to the people's reluctance to relocate, he said.

- Bernama

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