

Sarawak expected to generate RM60mil budget surplus, says Taib
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KUCHING - According to Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud, Sarawak's 2011 budget proposal is expected to generate a surplus of RM60 million next year to ensure the state's financial position remains sound, Bernama reported.

Taib, who is also state Finance Minister, said Monday this was on the basis of an estimated total revenue of RM3.904 billion against ordinary expenditure of RM3.844 billion, which includes an appropriation to the development fund account.

"As a developing state, it is important that we have a budget that is biased towards development to stimulate a desirable level of economic activities and sustain economic growth during the year," he said when tabling the Supply (2011) Bill, which was later passed at the Sarawak Legislative Assembly sitting here.

He said the Budget 2011 would continue to be a development biased budget with RM3.630 billion or about 73 percent of the total RM4.974 billion being proposed for development and RM1.344 billion or 27 percent for recurrent expenditure.

It is also to provide adequate funds for the successful implementation and completion of all contractually committed projects brought forward to the 10th Malaysia Plan (10MP) as well as other state commitments during the year, he explained.

According to Taib, of the total amount proposed as development expenditure, he said RM3.163 billion would be funded by the state while RM467 million is to be financed by the federal government through loans and reimbursement grants.

He said allocations proposed for major programmes under the development budget, include RM1.737 billion for the commerce and industry sector to implement various industrial estates projects, entrepreneur development programmes and investments, besides government development grants and loans to statutory bodies.

Another RM249 million is for transport and communications, especially for roads, bridges and ports while RM343 million is for general administration, meant for the implementation of various programmes and projects to improve governmental facilities to enhance the service delivery.

He said RM635 million would be allocated for agricultural purposes such as land development, drainage and irrigation, assistance to farmers, veterinary, fisheries, agricultural research and forestry programmes.

An allocation of RM447 million would be used for the upgrading and development of various water supply projects in addition to RM219 million for social development and community services, including housing and resettlement schemes, sports and recreational facilities.

Apart from the state's own efforts, Taib said, more funding would be sought from the federal government under the 10MP, especially for infrastructural projects for roads and utilities, particularly in the rural areas.

"There is also a need to improve and upgrade public amenities in cities and towns to cater

for the needs of a growing population, greater urbanisation, higher expectations and demands for more sophisticated facilities," he added.

He said, such public amenities include the sewerage system, drainage networks, waste disposal and water supply facilities.

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