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First step to big change

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Construction of Sabah's side of RM29bil highway project to roll out

By MAZWIN NIK ANIS
mazwin@thestar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: Construction of the much-anticipated Sabah portion of the Pan Borneo Highway – set to change the socio-economic landscape of the Land Below the Wind – will kick off end of this month.

The construction will begin with works on the first package of the project involving the Papar-Donggongon stretch.

The first phase will see the upgrading of the 11.7km stretch to a four-lane dual carriageway that will be part of the 706km stretch of the Sabah side of the highway.

Upon its completion, the Pan Borneo Highway Sabah will provide better connectivity and network to 3.7 million people, bringing about economic and development boom to the state's interiors.

It is also expected to spur the growth of eco-tourism attractions in the states.

The stretch in Sabah will start at Sindumin at the western coast.

Construction cost for Sabah's portion of the highway is estimated at RM12.8bil.

The project delivery partner agreement between the federal and state governments, as well as the Borneo Highway PDP Sdn Bhd, was signed yesterday.

It was witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, his deputy Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman.

Borneo Highway PDP is the project delivery partner that has been entrusted to manage and supervise



Done deal: Najib applauding as Works Ministry chief secretary Datuk Seri Zohari Akob (right) exchanges documents with Sabah government's state secretary Tan Sri Sukarti Wakiman in Putrajaya. Looking on (from left) are Musa, Dr Ahmad Zahid and Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof. — Bernama

the construction of the highway in the state.

Speaking to reporters after the event, Musa thanked the Prime Minister and the Federal Government for their commitment in ensuring that the Sabah portion of the highway would be built.

"It shows sincerity in wanting to see the people of Sabah benefit from the development of more infrastructure," he said.

The construction of the Pan Borneo Highway was one of the pledges made during the 13th general election.

In Budget 2016, Najib announced that the ambitious RM29bil toll-free 1,700 link was expected to be completed by 2021.

The Sarawak stretch of the highway spans RM1,090km from Tanjung Datu to Merapuk, costing RM16.1bil.