

**Pan Borneo Highway Boost For Sarawak Economy – Najib
Bernama
July 1, 2015**

KUALA LUMPUR, July 1 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today expressed optimism that the Sarawak stretch of the Pan Borneo Highway would trigger intensive economic growth and transform the life of the people in the state.

The prime minister said the highway would also help realise the government efforts to bring development to the people as the road links the major cities in the state and connects to a highway in Sabah.

"It is my dream to see balanced development and a reduction in the development gap among peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak become a reality," he said in his latest post on his blog, www.najibrazak.com.

Najib yesterday witnessed the signing of an agreement for construction of the 1,090-km-long Sarawak stretch of the Pan Borneo Highway among the federal government, Sarawak government and Lebuhraya Borneo Utara Sdn Bhd (LBU) in Putrajaya.

The accord was signed by Works Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Zohari Akob; Sarawak state secretary Tan Sri Mohamad Morshidi Abdul Ghani and LBU chairman Tan Sri Abang Ahmad Urai Hakim Abang Mohideen.

Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof; Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Dr Ali Hamsa also witnessed the signing of the agreement.

The first phase of construction of the highway involves a 773-km alignment, and work on it is expected to begin in September.

The Sarawak stretch is part of the 2,239-km Pan Borneo Highway that will eventually link the major cities of Sarawak and Sabah.

Najib said that just like the North-South Expressway in the peninsula, the Pan Borneo Highway would open up development opportunities and improve inter-city links.

The Pan Borneo Highway is being constructed at a cost of RM27 billion and it is expected to be completed in 2020.

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