

## **PM Checks for Himself Progress of Kapit-Kanowit Road Project**

**Bernama**

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KANOWIT (Sarawak), March 27 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak spent the whole of the last day of his working visit today in the middle of Sarawak to find out the progress on construction work packages on a land route between Kapit town, in the middle of the interior of Sarawak, with Kanowit which is located downstream.

He said the overall cost of the construction work of up to RM800 million showed how committed the government was in developing the rural areas in Sarawak by providing good access to the areas with the outside world.

According to Najib, it included several routes which were missing links, and bypasses which had already been identified to be implemented soon, which were expected to be fully completed in two-and-a-half years.

"The missing links and bypasses which cost RM150 million, I feel are much needed to link Kapit with the outside world via a land road access," he told a media conference after visiting the Kanowit Youth Carnival in Taman Muhibbah here today.

Earlier, he had visited the site of a road and bridge project across Sungai Kanowit here worth RM50 million, which are expected to be completed by the middle of next month.

Starting early in the morning, Najib visited towns on the fringes of the Sungai Rajang, starting in Kapit, about 128 km from Sibu town (in central Sarawak), before going upriver to Nangga Ngungun and Song town, before ending his visit here.

He said that during his visit to Nangga Ngungun, a resettlement area at one time when the government was combating the communist threat, he found the area had not developed.

He immediately decided to approve the construction of a 20km road from Nangga Ngungun to Nangga Jagau to enable easier access to develop the area, at a cost of RM50 million, after hearing the request of the local community.

Najib said the people should realise that such accessibility projects could be implemented following the success of the government in implementing the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

"All these the government can implement although in a global economy which is uncertain and challenging for us...for example, in terms of the significant drop in oil prices, but because of GST, it made it possible for us to implement numerous rural projects," he said.

"Without the GST, the Pan Borneo Highway could not have been implemented, not possible for this Jalan Kapit-Song-Kanowit to be carried out.

"We should not condemn the GST without realising its aim is to strengthen the government's financial

position because only 10 per cent of working people are paying taxes, it is not enough to bring development especially to the rural areas," he added.

Najib then left for Sibu airport to return to the federal capital, ending his two-day working visit to Sarawak.

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