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Majority Sabah's problem roads belong to Federal

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KOTA KINABALU: Sabah is due to spend RM127 million on education this year, according to State Finance Minister Datuk Seri Masidi Manjun.

"This will benefit 10,000 Sabahans," he said at Affin Bank Berhad's Chinese New Year dinner event held at the Le Meridien Hotel recently.

Congratulating Affin Bank Berhad on its 50th Anniversary this year, Masidi commended the bank for its role in the development of Sabah by supporting the business community.

He said all Sabahans irrespective of ethnicity if they are good, will benefit from State scholarships for certain courses.

"We are actively trying to develop the workforce in Sabah, so that banks like Affin, industrialists and investors will have the confidence that Sabah has the required manpower.

Masidi said investments had increased in Sabah with Sipitang Oil and Gas Industrial Park (SOGIP) fully taken up with the likes of a single Chinese investor Esteel Enterprise's investment to put in some RM19.8 billion to build a Green Steel manufacturing factory and a private jetty there, besides others.

The Kota Kinabalu Industrial Park (KKIP) sites are also fully taken up. The State Government is looking at setting up one or two more industrial parks.

The State Cabinet has agreed develop-



Affin CEO Wan Razly (left) and Masidi extending Gong Xi Fa Cai greetings at the event.

ment of the industrial parks in south western Kimanis and the second in northern Kota Belud-Kota Marudu districts as the current two industrial parks have been fully taken up.

The proposed Kimanis Industrial Park would focus on oil and gas industries and would complement the neighbouring Sipitang's Sabah Oil and Gas Industrial Park (Sogip) which had been fully taken up by various investors.

The industrial park to be developed in Kota Belud-Kota Marudu area would also be for general industries similar to KKIP.

"There are a lot of opportunities in Sabah. We have to build a good business ecosystem for development," Masidi said,

noting the purchase of a stake in the bank by the Sarawak Government might contribute to better mutual East Malaysia development fundings.

On electricity woes in Sabah, Masidi noted that, "everybody is blaming the State Government. With the exception of a small share, Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd actually belongs to Tenaga Nasional Berhad.

"Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) is a GLC of the Federal government. Everyone should understand that the State government cannot solve the problem alone. The majority shareholder must put in more effort to solve problems. They hold 80 per cent share of Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd (SESB).

He said the State Government had taken over the role of the Energy Commission with ECoS, but the monopoly to generate power still belongs to SESB under TNB and their contractual IPPs.

"I am here to state the facts as they stand."

Masidi also explained that in Sabah there are three categories of roads - Federal, State and local authority roads including rural roads.

He said most of the roads being blamed for faults are federal roads, under the maintenance and jurisdiction of the Federal Government through concessionaires.

"I just want you all to understand the facts, and not just blame the State Government. I am here to share the facts of the case."