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Penans affected by Murum dam getting best deal, says resettlement officer

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BINTULU: The Penans affected by the Murum hydroelectric dam impoundment are getting the best resettlement deal ever offered.

Sarawak Energy Bhd (SEB) Murum HEP resettlement officer Bit Surang said on top of receiving 15ha of land per household, they would get new and better homes as well as aid from the government worth more than RM600,000 per household.

"As a resettler myself, I think the Penans are getting far better deals than what we got in the past.

"If planned well I think within

three to five years from now, the Penans can be far more developed than they are now," he told reporters after presenting his papers during

the media workshop on the Murum hydroelectric project (HEP) here yesterday.

Bit is one of those affected by the Bakun HEP.

He said at the moment, there were 192 Penan households yet to be resettled.

When asked about the recent blockade, Bit said he was unsure if there had been any outside instigation, but assured that the Penans

understood the terms as SEB had been engaging the community since 2008.

"If there had been lack of communication with the community, I think that is not true.

"We have and never will force them to move out to the new settlement.

"There have been rumours [saying they would not step out and move but when a date has been set, the previous resettled Penans eventually moved to the new area willingly. So I believe those remaining will move to the new resettlement eventually," he said.