

KERATAN AKHBAR

TARIKH : 8 FEBRUARI 2022
AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 2

Tapping into investment potential



Future forward: Ismail Sabri (centre) with (from left) Mahdzir, Mustapa, Muhammad Sanusi and NCIA chief executive Datuk Seri Jebasingam Issacé John at the launch of Kedah Rubber City in Padang Terap, Kuala Nerang. — CHAN BOON KAI/The Star

By IMRAN HILMY
imran@thestar.com.my

ALOR SETAR: The newly launched Kedah Rubber City (KRC) project is expected to generate some 15,000 employment opportunities for Malaysians and attract RM10bil worth of investment by 2025, says the Prime Minister.

Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said the project had already attracted RM4bil in investments even though it had just been officially launched.

"It has also already generated almost 7,000 job opportunities for the Malaysian Family," he said in his speech at the official launch in Padang Terap here yesterday.

He said KRC is one of the national

strategic projects by the Federal Government in Kedah and within the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER) that came at the right time when the country was still recovering from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The country's first ever dedicated rubber eco-industrial park is expected to sustain the current growth trajectory of the state and northern region, he added.

KRC is one of various projects implemented by the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) in collaboration with the state government to transform Kedah into a developed state and to narrow the regional development gap.

Expected to be completed in

2025, KRC will be developed in two phases in an area spanning 1,244 acres and it is aimed at becoming a leader in the development of Malaysia's rubber industry as well as a global hub for the high-value rubber industry.

It will leverage on its strategic location along the "Rubber Belt" area of the Malaysia-Thailand border and within the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle, serving as a rubber product innovation centre to support downstream and upstream activities.

With Phase One completed at a cost of RM415.7mil, Phase Two is scheduled to start in 2023.

Ismail Sabri said KRC is also expected to boost the income of rubber smallholders in Kedah by

ensuring a continuous and sustainable demand for their natural rubber, as well as stabilising the commodity's prices by optimising its usage through the production of value-added downstream products.

The NCIA, he added, will collaborate with the Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority (Risda) to nurture and develop local rubber smallholders under the KRC project, potentially benefiting 73,642 smallholders in the state, including 11,190 in Padang Terap.

Ismail Sabri later witnessed the exchange of documents between NCIA and its strategic partners in conjunction with the launch of KRC.

In his speech, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor

said Kedah's economy made a strong rebound last year on the back of private investments in the export-driven manufacturing sector, particularly in the production of rubber gloves, electrical and electronic products, and renewable energy.

Investment growth for Kedah will be further sustained with the implementation of high-impact strategic projects such as KRC, he added.

Also present at the launch were Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed, Rural Development Minister Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid, Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azlan Man and Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad.