

KERATAN AKHBAR

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UP TO AUG 31

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THE East Coast Economic Region Development Council (ECERDC) has successfully attracted RM13 billion in committed investments, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

He said the committed investments, up to Aug 31, were expected to generate 7,080 jobs and nearly 300 entrepreneurship opportunities.

"The 300 business opportunities will bring us closer towards the target of RM14 billion in committed investments.

"I am confident the Kelantan special incentive package, as well as the reopening of the country's borders, will help ECERDC attract even more high-impact investments," he said at the launch of the Kampung Laut Heritage Village in Tumpat near here yesterday.

Present were Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Ahmad Yakob, Terengganu Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Samsuri Mokhtar, Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Wan Rosdy Wan Ismail and Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi.

Ismail Sabri said apart from the Kampung Laut Heritage Village project, another ECERDC project for Kelantan under the federal government was the construction of the Palekbang bridge.

He said the bridge project, slated to begin at year-end, was expected to resolve Kota Baru's traffic woes and boost the local socio-economy.

"I've been informed that the appointment of contractors for the project will be finalised at the end of this year. The 4km bridge will also serve as another attraction for Kampung Laut.

"This is the federal government's continuous commitment to ensure balanced development for the people of Kelantan, in line with the aspirations of Keluarga Malaysia."

Ismail Sabri said the government approved four projects for Kelantan during the ECERDC



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob greeting people at the launch of the Kampung Laut Heritage Village in Tumpat, Kelantan, yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

meeting held at the Darulnaim Complex here yesterday.

The projects are the border town development; Phase 3 of the East Coast Expressway project; the extension of the Kuantan - Segamat highway involving routes from Runchang to Simpang 3 Keratong, covering a distance of 51km; and, Phase 2 of the Rantau Panjang-Golok flood mitigation project at a cost of about RM897 million.

"At the meeting, the government agreed to the border town development project, which includes a bridge connecting Rantau Panjang to Sungai Golok, and the Takbai bridge, which connects Pengkalan Kubor to Takbai. This shows that the federal government is fair to all state governments."

Ismail Sabri said the Phase 3 of the East Coast Expressway would span 147km, from Gemuruh in Terengganu to Pengkalan Kubor in Kelantan.

On the flood mitigation project, Ismail Sabri said he was informed that about 60 per cent of the first phase had been completed.

He hoped the project would solve flood-related problems in Rantau Panjang and surrounding areas.

Ismail Sabri said the federal government will support the Kelantan government's proposal to gazette Masjid Kampung Laut as a World Heritage Site under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco).

The federal government also welcomed a proposal to gazette the mosque as a national monument under the National Heritage Department.

"Masjid Kampung Laut is unique as it was entirely constructed from chengal wood without using a single nail.

"I believe the proposal to recognise the mosque for its history and cultural significance under the National Heritage Department and Unesco will elevate its heritage status. The federal government believes the proposal is very significant for the mosque and our country."

Following huge floods in 1926 and 1966, the mosque was moved to Nilam Puri, some 20km away.

"I am happy that after more than 50 years, the mosque has returned to its original location," said Ismail Sabri.

He added the federal government had spent about RM40 million for the Kampung Laut redevelopment project.

"The government hopes the project, which includes Laman Warisan Serunding, will give local entrepreneurs the opportunity to market their products."

Ahmad Yakob said the Kelantan government had pledged its readiness to work with the federal government to ensure that all projects in the state proceeded according to plan.

He said a similar level of cooperation would be given to ECERDC initiatives.

"These include the Tok Bali Industrial Park development transformation project and agro-food projects, such as the Kelantan Dairy Valley, as well as coconut planting projects," he said.

Ahmad Yakob, who is also Pasir Pekan assemblyman, expressed hope that the projects would proceed smoothly and boost the state's economic growth.

On the Kampung Laut Heritage project, Ahmad Yakob said the state government was confident that it would bring plenty of benefits for the people.

"The Palekbang bridge project, for example, is one that is long awaited by Kelantan folk."