

# \$1bil project in advanced stage of planning

# New rail link to East Coast

RST 19 JUL 1985

By K. VIJIAN

**TAIPING, Thurs.** — A new East-West railway line linking Cukai in Terengganu with Port Klang is being planned, the Prime Minister announced today.

The new line will pass through the Kuala Lumpur Railway Station and the major towns in Pahang. It will also be linked to the Kuantan Port.

The new Bukit Tinggi Federal Territory will also be included in the list of new stations.

The East-West line will facilitate easy travel to the East Coast States.

Passengers from the north wanting to go to the East Coast by train now have to travel all

● CHUGGING ALONG  
100 YEARS ON: P14

the way to Gemas in Johore and catch a train to their destinations.

The new East-West link is also likely to prove a big boost for domestic tourism.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad explained that this new East-West line was necessary because of the rapid development taking place in the East Coast States, particularly following the discovery of oil off Terengganu.

He added that to reduce the burden that would have to be borne by the Government, parts of this new line would be privatised.

He said new railway stations to be built in the towns in Pahang, through which the line would pass, would have restaurants, shopping arcades and a hotel.

The tracks would run below these stations and not alongside as in the existing stations.

He was confident that the new line would enhance economic activities in towns along the route.

Opening the centenary celebrations of the Malayan Railway, the Prime Minister also spoke of several modernisation programmes for it, including the introduction of electric trains.

## Services

He described as "inevitable" the introduction of electric trains in view of the development and progress taking place.

Malaysia is rich in hydro-electric power and

gas which can be exploited for the electric trains.

Electric trains would also help check air pollution, he added.

Financial constraints had hindered Malayan Railway's modernisation programme but this did not mean that the Government was neglecting its responsibility because the railway was the best means of transport for all the people, the Prime Minister said.

To attract more passengers, Dr Mahathir advised Malayan Railway to advertise and popularise its services.

Transport Minister Tan Sri Chong Hon Ngian later said that the East-West line project was in a "very advanced" stage of planning and was expected to cost \$1 billion.