

Project to cover entire west coast ' Plan to reclaim land approved

By Syed Abu Bakar

JITRA, Mon. — The Government has approved a 3.2km-wide land reclamation project along the entire west coast of the peninsula, stretching from Perlis to Johore.

Announcing this today, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the reclaimed land would be turned into economic growth areas.

The project is vital as Malaysia's population is rapidly expanding at the rate of one million every three years and preparations must be made to provide them with jobs, schools, roads and other facilities, he added.

Speaking at the opening of the Kubang Pasu Umno delegates meeting here, he said the plan to reclaim land

on the west coast was necessary because the country is running out of suitable land for industrial and other projects.

He said the plan was mooted when the Government decided to reclaim land in Kuah, Langkawi, recently.

Dr Mahathir said the Government was seeking the services of the Japanese International Co-operation

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Agency to carry out a feasibility study on the mammoth project.

He said one of the reasons why the west coast was selected for the project was because it is sufficiently shallow for reclamation work.

Speaking to reporters later, he said the project would be implemented in stages with priority given to areas which needed it most.

Another consideration is that while it might be cheaper to reclaim some areas compared with others, such areas might not be suitable for indus-

trial uses.

The Prime Minister said some parts of the project might be privatised while others would be carried out by the Government.

He made it clear that the reclamation project was long-term in nature and would be carried out in stages, possibly taking up to 30 years to complete.

Dr Mahathir said the reclamation work to be carried out along the Perlis coast between Kuala Perlis and Kuala Sanglang was part of this plan.

He was apparently referring to a project to reclaim 4,000 hectares of land for industrial use.

The memorandum of understanding for the project was signed on Saturday between the Perlis State Economic Development Corporation and three private companies.

The three are developer Menang Corporation (M) Bhd and two private investment companies — Longgain Sdn Bhd and RTR Corporation Sdn Bhd.