

20 MAR 1996

Ramli-Proton

AUTOMOBILE CENTRE TO BE KNOWN AS TG MALIM PROTON CITY

TANJUNG MALIM, March 20 (Bernama) -- The area for Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional's (Proton) second factory in Behrang Ulu, near here, will be known as Tanjung Malim Proton City, Perak Menteri Besar Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib said today.

He said it would be referred to as such pending the adoption of a more suitable name.

Work on the 1,600-hectare integrated automobile township would begin after the ground-breaking ceremony by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Saturday.

The project was a "spin off" of the country's heavy industries development, he told reporters after attending a briefing on preparations for Saturday's project launch at the site, about 20km from here.

A big-scale ceremony would mark the birth of the project as it was expected to give a major boost to the state's economy and the well-being of people living in this district, he said.

He hoped that Proton and Hicom would strike a balance between nature and development when implementing the RM4 billion project by preserving the greenery in the area.

Apart from the car factory, Proton and Hicom will also build a vendor centre, research and development facilities, and housing, commercial recreational projects in the area currently dotted with estates and traditional houses.

The whole project was expected to take 10 years to complete but the car plant would begin production in 1998 or 1999, he said.

Ramli said a highway would be built between Slim River and Teluk Intan and the road network there would be upgraded to cater for the anticipated increase in traffic.

The road projects would be built with federal allocations or through privatisation, he said.

The proposed highway would be linked to the planned west coast highway to reduce travelling time between Behrang Ulu and the Lumut and Klang ports, he said. -- Bernama

HK YBY