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Kuantan to be linked by rail with Kertih

Azran Aziz

KUANTAN, Mon. - The Government will develop a dedicated railway line between here and Kertih in Terengganu to facilitate easy movement and transportation of raw materials for industrial needs.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Petronas and KTM Berhad would discuss the implementation of the project.

Speaking to reporters after opening the packaging and silica plants belonging to W.R. Grace and Co. at the Gebeng industrial estate, he said the project was deemed necessary because the Government planned to build a railway track linking the west and east coast of the peninsula.

"Although the cost may be high, we have to embark on this project because of rapid development in the east coast.

"With this facility, it will be easier for people from the west coast to come to this part of the country and vice versa," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the Government would undertake a study and hoped the project could take off the ground as soon as possible.

On the Gebeng industrial estate, the Prime Minister said Pahang had succeeded in attracting a lot of foreign investment and this had helped realise the Federal Government's plan to develop the Eastern Corridor, comprising Pahang, Terengganu, Kelantan and parts of Johor.

"I think Pahang's concentration on large industries is right because the State has vast tracts of land and it is also close to the coast," he added.

Bernama reports that Dr Mahathir and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, will spend the night at the Kuala Tahan National Park in Jerantut as part of their two-day visit to the State.

The residents turned out in full force to greet the Prime Minister and Dr Siti Hasmah.

Also at the national park are Pahang Menteri Besar Tan Sri Khalil Yaakub, several Cabinet Ministers including Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Law Hieng Ding and Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik.

Earlier in Pekan, Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah spent more than an hour inspecting facilities at the Tasik Cini tourist area.

They were briefed by Pahang Tenggara Development Authority general manager Mohd Yusoff.

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