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Tioman-Development

TIOMAN DEVELOPMENT NO ADVERSE IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENT

PULAU TIOMAN, Jan 21 (Bernama) -- Pahang today assures the public that development on Pulau Tioman, soon to be made a duty-free island, will have no adverse impacts on its environment and social aspects.

State Culture, Arts, Tourism and Women Affairs Committee chairman Maznah Mazlan said all forms of development on the island will adhere to the plan drawn out by Tioman Development Authority (TDA).

She said the plan, drawn out in 1996, had divided the island into the development, limited development and development-free zones.

"Any development on Tioman will conform to this plan and according to the stipulated requirements," she told reporters here today.

Last week Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad confirmed that the government will turn Pulau Tioman into the country's third duty-free island after Langkawi and Labuan.

Maznah said Tioman's development zone is only 1,202 ha (nine per cent), while the limited development zone measures 1,470 ha (11 per cent) and development-free zone is 10,688 or 80 per cent of the island's 13,360 ha total area.

Maznah said the state government will upgrade the island's infrastructures and this includes construction of a cargo jetty in Kampung Tekek here and a jetty at the tourist embarkation point at Tanjung Gemuk in Rompin, each at the cost of RM6 million.

"We (Pahang government) plan to construct a 45km-long road to link all villages on the island at the cost of RM66 million," she said.

Maznah said the project will be implemented in stages and the first phase from Kampung Tekek to the Marine park at the cost of RM1.5 million had been approved.

She said the TDA had identified a site in Kampung Tekek for the construction of a RM6 million commercial centre.

Meanwhile the move to make Pulau Tioman a duty-free island has drawn mixed response from the islanders.

Abdul Latif Salam, 45, of Kampung Mukut while welcoming the move, expressed concern that development on the island may bring negative social impacts to the island's youths.

"More or less there could be some negative influence but it is up to the locals to overcome this.

"Even if there is not many outsiders, the villagers will still be affected if they themselves want to do it," he said.

Latif, who operates a chalet in the village said the move will benefit the islanders as it brings economic growth apart from allowing them to buy goods at cheaper prices.

Fisherman Ismail Awang Ngah, 60, who also operates a boat-hire service, lauded the move to develop Tioman, saying that it will bring more jobs and tourists, especially from Singapore, to the island.

-- BERNAMA

HIS ZUL