

Sendayan to replace Sungai Besi as Air Force base

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Prime Minister Najib Razak today named Sendayan in Negeri Sembilan as a new base for the Royal Malaysia Air Force (RMAF), replacing the military airport in Sungai Besi, Kuala Lumpur.

Najib made the announcement after visiting the Syed Sirajuddin Camp's community rehabilitation centre in Gemas.

The prime minister, however, declined to elaborate when the project could start or the scale of the project.

Defence Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who was at the news conference, said a detailed announcement would be made later.

Air Force chief Rodzali Daud was reported by a local media today as saying that the contract for the new base would be signed next month.

Sendayan is located 12km from Seremban.

The RMAF land in Sungai Besi - one of the last remaining premium real estate in Kuala Lumpur city - will be redeveloped by 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

1MDB required to build replacement base

The 1MDB is allowed to develop the RMAF base in Sungai Besi into a commercial centre on the condition that it completes the construction of the new military air base in Sendayan.

Defence Minister Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said 1MDB needed to build the runway, terminal building, control tower and other facilities.

"According to our understanding, 1MDB must first build the new air base, then only they'll be allowed to develop the site in Sungai Besi," he told reporters after opening the Bakri Umno divisional meeting in Muar today. To a question, Ahmad Zahid said the project in Sendayan would be completed within five years.

In search of civil service's optimal size

In another development, Najib said the government would implement new strategies to come up with an optimum size of its civil service.

At the moment, there was a three-month freeze for the intake of new staff to fill up posts that had been left vacant, he said.

The right-sizing exercise would benefit the country in terms of a more productive civil service, he said.

"This will also mean that government employees will get a better benefit in the future," he said.

- Bernama