

DATE: 01 / 08 / 2007

Northern Perak to see development in agriculture, tourism

NST - 1/8/2007

TAIPING: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi unveiled development plans for northern Perak under the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER), focusing on the modernisation of agriculture.

He said the area would also see the setting up of more manufacturing industries and the boosting of tourism.

Padi farming, one of the main economic activities in the Kerian district, would undergo a similar transformation as the country's rice bowl in Kedah under the NCER blueprint.

Abdullah said Kerian had also been earmarked for the development of horticulture with an emphasis on the growing of flowers for export.

As for Selama, he said the district had been slated for large-scale husbandry while an aquaculture centre would be set up in Kuala Sepetang, near here.

Manufacturing, which is concentrated in Penang and Kulim, Kedah, would be expanded to northern Perak, he said at the launching of the Perak portion of the four-state NCER masterplan in Selinsing, 20km from here.

"We want to make sure towns such as Parit Buntar and Taiping will get their fair share in terms of investments in the electrical and electronics sector.

"The inclusion of these towns, when combined with Penang and the Kulim Hi-Tech Park, will create a new synergy in terms of growth for the northern region."

To make sure the manufacturing sector in the NCER would not be hindered by a lack of human

We must take full advantage of Belum forest's rich biodiversity.

*Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi
Prime Minister*

capital, a training centre would be set up in Kerian, he said.

Abdullah said the centre, to be built by Sime Darby Bhd, would produce workers trained in manufacturing.

On tourism, he said, the Hulu Perak district, where the Belum forest is located, would be promoted for eco-tourism.

A research centre for herbal biotechnology is also in the works.

"We must take full advantage of the forest's rich biodiversity. There has been a scientific study on a plant from the forest which could cure cancer.

"If this is successful, perhaps a cure for cancer can be developed at a reasonable cost."

Present at the function attended by some 10,000 people were Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohd Tajol Rosli Ghazali, Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid, Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim and Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon.