

Plans for Pahang nuke lab

The Star - 15/7/2007

Asean's first monitoring facility will be built in Rompin

By ROSLINA MOHAMAD
roslina@thestar.com.my

MUADZAM SHAH: Asean's first nuclear monitoring laboratory will be built in Bukit Ibam, Rompin, at the cost of RM100mil and is expected to be operational in three years' time.

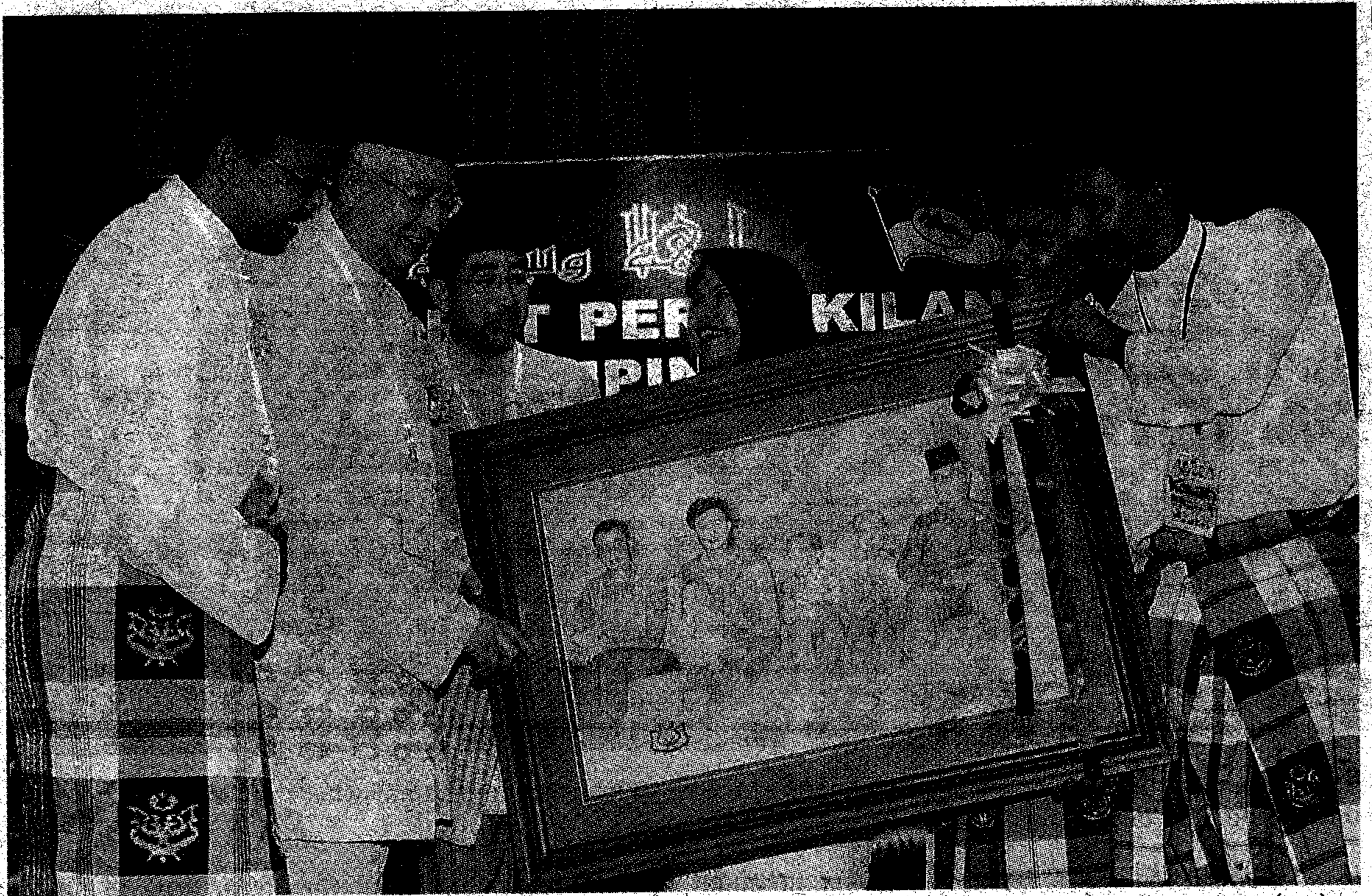
Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the location of the laboratory was part of the Government's efforts to ensure balanced development among rural regions in the country.

"Pahang will see more development in the future, especially when the Eastern Regional Development master plan formulated by Petronas starts to take shape," he said when addressing the crowd at a meet-the-people session at the Muadzam Shah sports complex field here yesterday.

Also present were Rompin MP and Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Jamaludin Jarjis and state executive council member and Rompin Umno deputy chief Datuk Maznah Mazlan.

Jamaludin said the laboratory would be the first of its kind in a developing country and 16th in the world after those located in Europe, Japan and Australia.

"The site, covering some 200ha, will be run by locals. We have 66 scientists who are expert in nuclear-related subjects. Many of them are already involved in various multi-lateral works with the International Atomic



Artwork memento: Najib receiving a souvenir from Rompin Umno Youth chief Mohd Safri Abd Aziz (left) after opening an Umno meeting in Muadzam Shah yesterday. With them are Dr Jamaludin (third from left) and Maznah (fourth from left). — Bernama

Energy Agency," he added.

Najib said the Cabinet had agreed to implement the project following recommendations made by the agency as none of the developing countries had such a facility.

The agency noted that Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand had announced their intentions of developing nuclear energy programmes and as such there was a need for a nuclear monitoring laboratory to be

set up in the region, he added.

Its other function included providing services for countries that needed to check whether their nuclear-powered facilities and surroundings were safe, he added.