

PM: INITIATIVES WILL ASSIST RECOVERY

Many of the plans focusing on the economy reflective of 2021 Budget, says IRDA CEO

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THE high-impact initiatives outlined by Iskandar Malaysia will assist in the country's economic recovery from the ravages of Covid-19, said Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

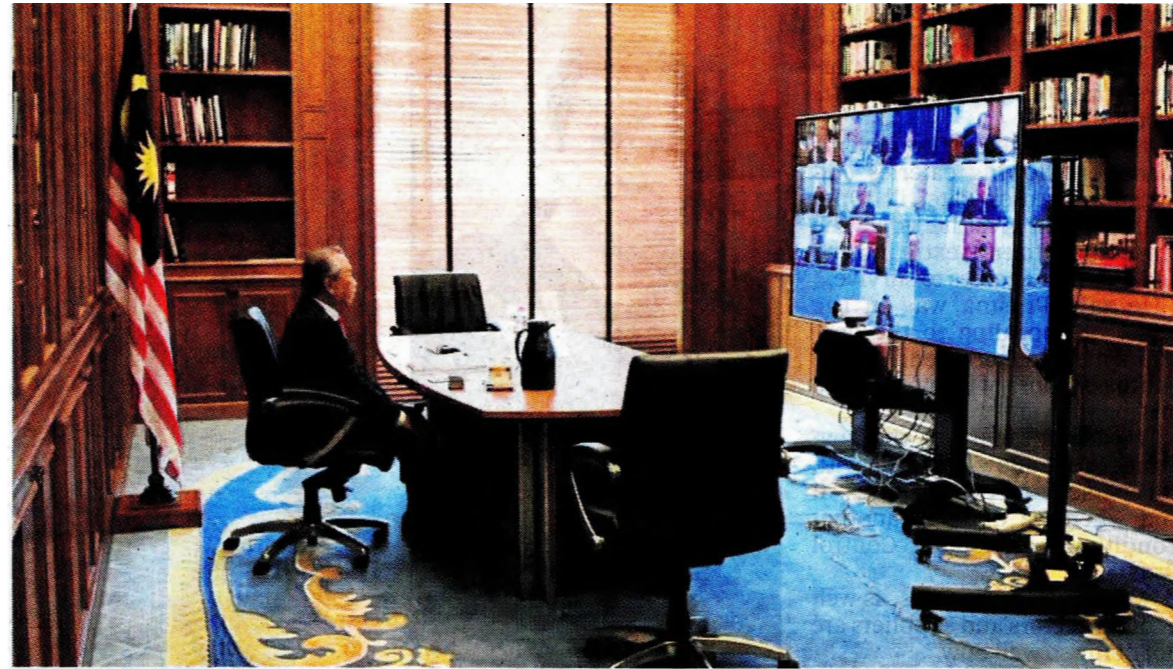
The Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA) co-chairman said he was pleased to see that Iskandar Malaysia had taken efforts to reinforce its focus on high-impact initiatives.

"These initiatives will not only support survivability, but also continuously boost our economy and protect the lives and livelihoods of the *rakyat*," he said in a statement yesterday.

On Thursday, Muhyiddin chaired IRDA's members of authority meeting via video conferencing.

He added that the Perikatan Nasional government had already implemented many initiatives to address the basic needs of the *rakyat* and ensure that small businesses could continue to survive during these difficult times.

While acknowledging the enormous potential of the region, Muhyiddin said Iskandar Malaysia should also explore opportunities in modern farming, as it could be a key contributor to the country's national food se-



Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin chairing the Iskandar Regional Development Authority meeting via video conferencing on Thursday. PIC COURTESY OF THE ISKANDAR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

curity agenda.

"With plenty of land areas and investors' interest in the region and a well-coordinated effort with the relevant government ministries and agencies, implementing modern farming could turn Johor into the biggest food producer in the country."

Iskandar Malaysia has recently outlined bubble travellers, hard and soft infrastructure and talent reskilling initiatives as part of its year-long core programmes to assist in the country's economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Through the bubble travellers' initiative, targeted individuals who can contribute towards the local economy are allowed to enter the country.

They can be business travellers, international students or tourists

from Covid-19 green zone countries.

These bubble travellers must adhere to strict guidelines, such as arriving through bonded transportation, and only visiting nominated locations.

IRDA chief executive Datuk Ismail Ibrahim said many of the initiatives that Iskandar Malaysia concentrated on was reflective of the 2021 Budget.

"All these will ensure that the benefits and results we reap are in line with the national agenda which ultimately will benefit the people through a stronger and more stable economy.

"These initiatives, combined with the region's existing advantages in terms of location and resources, will further boost the region's holistic ecosystem, making it a prime location for economic recovery."



Datuk Ismail Ibrahim

For talent reskilling, Ismail said to encourage the deployment of semi-skilled and skilled Malaysian talents, the Iskandar Malaysia Talent Innovation programme had been designed to carry out on-the-job training for those who have been retrenched.

"The programme will also ensure less dependence on foreign workers by encouraging companies to innovate and re-engineer

their work processes."

He added that the Human Capital Development Programme for Iskandar Malaysia-promoted economic sectors, meanwhile, would focus on niche and required programmes to cater specifically to talent needs and talent gaps driven by industry demands in the nine promoted economic sectors.

"As 'Smart City' is the key agenda in the region, the Technopreneur Incubator Programme seeks to hone fresh graduates and unemployed graduates to become technopreneurs, with focus on innovation and commercialisation."

- He said for financial year 2020, Iskandar Malaysia was expected to record RM24 billion in cumulative investments from January to December, with 75 per cent deriving from foreign investors and 25 per cent from domestic investors.

"The promoted sectors contributed 43 per cent to the total investments recorded last year."

Ismail added that in the same corresponding year, investment in the manufacturing sector remained the top among the nine promoted sectors, followed by logistics, tourism, healthcare and the education sectors.

Among the top approved manufacturing projects in Iskandar Malaysia last year were Shimano Components (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd, Sapura Technics Sdn Bhd, SRE Power Technology Sdn Bhd, Baojia New Energy Manufacturing Sdn Bhd, Daiichi Seiko (M) Sdn Bhd and Enics Malaysia Sdn Bhd.

From 2006 up to now, Iskandar Malaysia's total cumulative investments stand at RM337.3 billion with China, Singapore, the United States, Japan, Netherlands and South Korea.