

Ismail Sabri wants to intensify rural urbanisation agenda

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KINABATANGAN: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob wants the rural urbanisation agenda to be intensified to drive development and eradicate poverty in rural areas.

Ismail Sabri said he would discuss this with Rural Development Minister Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid so that the agenda could be re-implemented as part of efforts to eradicate poverty in rural areas, especially in Sabah.

“Apart from projects planned by the Rural Development and

the Agriculture and Food Industries ministries to improve the economy of the people, efforts to bring adequate infrastructure to rural areas are also important.

“When I was the rural minister, I (highlighted) the concept of ‘urbanising the rural’, which means that if we develop rural areas with adequate infrastructure, including roads, water supply, electricity and telecommunications, industry can be brought to the area, which in turn will provide employment opportunities and help boost the economy.”

He said this after launching the Sabah Eastern Zone Pan Borneo Highway at Dataran Tamu Pekan in Kota Kinabatangan here yesterday.

In 2015, while holding the Rural and Regional Development Ministry portfolio, Ismail Sabri launched the rural urbanisation agenda as one of the measures to transform rural areas and ensure that the development of the areas was on the right track.

The agenda focused on six key areas, namely infrastructure, youth development, economics,

entrepreneurship, human capital and the delivery system.

He said balanced development with complete basic infrastructure in rural areas would attract more investors and provide employment opportunities, thus creating reverse migration, especially among the youths.

Meanwhile, Ismail Sabri said the federal government would continue to be committed to eradicating poverty not only in Sabah but also in Sarawak, Perlis, Kelantan, Terengganu and Kedah, in line with the 12th

Malaysia Plan (12MP).

He said the federal government aimed to eradicate hardcore poverty by 2025 under 12MP.

In a meeting with Sandakan community leaders on Friday, Ismail Sabri said he would discuss development at the Sabah-Kalimantan border with Indonesian President Joko Widodo during his visit to the country next week.

He said the discussion would cover efforts on modernising the border area, including developing the infrastructure, among others. **Bernama**