

# MRC, NCIA collaborate for Kedah Rubber City

*KRC aims to boost Malaysia's rubber sector through a Rubber Corridor Link that will connect major rubber producers in IMT-GT*

by ASILA JALIL

**MALAYSIAN** Rubber Council (MRC) and the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) have signed a memorandum of collaboration to attract investors to Kedah Rubber City (KRC).

KRC aims to boost Malaysia's rubber sector through a Rubber Corridor Link that will connect major rubber producers in the region namely Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT).

The KRC is located on 1,244 acres (503.42ha) of land and both parties have identified seven clusters for the KRC which are advanced latex products, tyre and tyre related products, automotive rubber products, engineering rubber products, advanced rubber materials, biotechnology and services and support.

"Apart from facilitating investors' entry to KRC, MRC plans to enhance our marketing and promotion efforts, including the dissemination of NCIA promotional materials for the KRC," said MRC CEO Nor Hizwan Ahmad during KRC's launch yesterday.

MRC and NCIA will jointly outline and implement a cooperative business process for the rubber city from lead generation to investment via the collaboration.

"MRC will continue to pave the way to connect industry players and the rubber products supply chain.

"We truly value NCIA's KRC initiatives and are looking forward to working together with them in advancing Malaysia's rubber industry," added Nor Hizwan.



According to Ismail Sabri, KRC is poised to attract potential investment worth RM10b and create 15,000 job opportunities by 2025

The industrial park is strategically located along the "rubber belt" area of the Malaysia-Thailand border. Its development covers an area spanning 1,244 acres consisting of 496 acres under Phase 1 and 748 acres in Phase 2.

During the launch of KRC, Prime Minister (PM) Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said the rubber city is poised to attract potential investment worth RM10 billion and create 15,000 job opportunities by 2025.

According to *Bernama*, Ismail Sabri said despite being just launched, the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER) strategic project had to date attracted committed investments of RM4 billion that would generate 7,000 jobs opportunities for the Malaysian Family.

"For example, the strategic partnership

between Mitsui & Co (M) and Hong Seng Consolidated Bhd involves an investment of about RM3 billion for KRC.

"The partnership will also strengthen the raw material supply chain in the manufacture of nitrile butadiene latex polymers through Mitsui's expertise in this industry. The investment will not only create 1,600 new job opportunities but will also help reduce the dependence on imported NBL polymers," said Ismail Sabri.

He added that the launch of the KRC project, one of the national strategic projects in NCER, was timely as the country was in the recovery process and its economic growth had been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

He noted that KRC was among the various game-changer projects implemented by the NCIA in collaboration with the Kedah

government to transform Kedah into a developed state, thus narrowing the regional development gap.

According to Ismail Sabri, KRC will also be a rubber product innovation centre to support downstream and upstream activities for the sector.

MRC is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities.

Its tasks include undertaking market promotion of quality Malaysian rubber and rubber products in the global markets.

The MRC is also showcasing made-in-Malaysia rubber products in Expo 2020 Dubai at the Malaysia Pavilion to tap the Middle East and North Africa market.

It had also launched the Malaysian Rubber Products Virtual Showcase, an online platform that facilitates online business engagements between international buyers and Malaysian rubber product manufacturers.

Meanwhile, NCIA in a separate statement said efforts to accelerate growth, NCER economic recovery post-pandemic were on track as seen from the strong economic recovery and resilience recorded by the region in 2021, with the growth expected to continue this year.

"Positive investor sentiment, implementation of strategic projects and programmes, as well as attractive incentives provided by the federal government through NCIA are expected to maintain the momentum of economic growth and recovery in the region this year," it said.

High-impact projects to be implemented to attract more private investment into the region include the KRC, Chuping Valley Industrial Area, Perlis Inland Port, Silver-Valley Technology Park and NCER Technology Innovation Centre.