

**ECER attracts over RM9b investments in Q1**  
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PUTRAJAYA: The East Coast Economic Region (ECER) successfully attracted investments worth RM9bil in tourism, aquaculture, manufacturing and education in the first quarter of the year.

ECER Development Council Chief Executive Officer Datuk Jebasingam Issace John said the nine new projects comprise two projects worth RM5.5bil in Mersing, Johor, five projects worth RM2bil in Pahang, one project worth RM1bil in Terengganu and another one project worth RM500mil in Kelantan.

"The new investments will enhance resource-based economic activities in ECER and help create better economic opportunities for the local populace by generating new jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities," he said at the document exchange ceremony between the ECER and the investors.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin witnessed the exchanging document ceremony.

Also present were Terengganu Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Ahmad Said, Pahang Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob, Johor Mentri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop.

The nine investors include Radiant Starfish Development Sdn Bhd, Damansara Assets Sdn Bhd, Encorp Bhd, Ocean Aquatic Marine (M) Sdn Bhd and Zhanjiang Guolian Aquatic Products Co Ltd; Andaman Sea Foods (M) Sdn Bhd; Gelnas Sdn Bhd; Nilai Mahir (M) Sdn Bhd and Johnson Controls Automotive Holdings (M) Sdn Bhd and Hicom University College Sdn Bhd.

Jebasingam said the three investments already approved in the ECER are Tioxide (M) Sdn Bhd (RM275mil), East Coast Universe Smelting & Mining (M) Sdn Bhd (RM80.3mil) and Q-Porcelain Manufacturing Sdn Bhd (RM7.8mil).

In Johor, Radiant Starfish Development Bhd plans to invest RM4.2bil to develop a fully integrated eco-tourism resort known as Mersing Laguna while Damansara Assets Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Johor Corporation, will develop a resort town known as the Tanjung Leman Integrated Resort and Coastal Township in Mersing with total investment value of RM1bil.

Both investments are expected to see the transformation of Mersing into a vibrant tourism hub with upgraded facilities and amenities.

In Pahang, Encorp Bhd will develop an integrated tourism resort and international golf course in Cherating with gross development value of RM1.3bil, Andaman Sea Foods Sdn Bhd will invest RM225mil in an integrated shrimp farm in Kampung Kasing, Rompin, and Gelnas Sdn Bhd will invest RM130mil in building a halal gelatine plant in the Gambang Halal Park.

Also Nilai Mahir (M) Sdn Bhd and Johnson Controls Automotive Holdings (M) Sdn Bhd will see a total investment of RM90mil in an automotive project in the Pekan Automotive Park and HICOM University College Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of DRB-HICOM Bhd, will invest

RM592.5mil to set up an automotive university college within the DRB-HICOM Automotive Hub in Pekan.

In Terengganu, Ocean Aquatic Marine (M) Sdn Bhd together with its joint venture partner, Zhanjiang Guolian Aquatic Products Co Ltd, will invest RM1bil over a five-year period in an integrated shrimp farm in Kampung Pasir Putih, Marang.

In Kelantan, Hongkew Holdings (M) Sdn Bhd will invest RM500mil to set up an integrated cement plant in Gua Musang.

Jebasingam told reporters later that more than 80 percent of the new investments announced day were from domestic investors.

"All nine investments will commence this year. The investors are ready to invest in the ECER in their respectively areas," he said.

Jebasingam said the ECERDC was set to revise upward its investment target to RM15bil this year as the investment for the first quarter had almost hit the RM10bil investment target.

"Within the first quarter of this year, we are able to get more than RM9bil. We have almost achieved our target. I have already discussed with my investment team to set RM15bil as our annual target," he said.

To date, the government has invested some RM2bil for infrastructure development in the ECER to support private sector investments.

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