

Batu Pahat readies for PM
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BATU PAHAT: Thousands are expected to flock to this town where Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak is celebrating his third year in office this Saturday.

The mammoth gathering at the district, which is known as the place where Umno had its beginning, will see some 50,000 people.

State Umno information chief Datuk Samsol Bari Jamali said Najib wanted to meet all the people who had been benefiting from the Government's policies.

"This will be a good chance for him to meet people from other towns beside Johor Baru," he said.

During his visit, Najib will launch a pamphlet detailing all the promises made and kept by Barisan Nasional over the years.

He will also have a walkabout at the market, where he is expected to join in a breakfast with traders and residents.

The celebration is slated to be held at Batu Pahat Stadium located in the town, which used to be known as Bandar Penggaram.

Penggaram assemblyman Datuk Koh Chee Chai billed Najib's visit as the largest event in the district so far, adding that people from all over would be arriving in the next few days to prepare for the celebration.

"Billboards and banners will be put up around the town," he added.

Located in the northwest of the state, the district, which has become synonymous with Umno founder Datuk Onn Jaafar, is also the birthplace for other high-profile politicians such as MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek and DAP stalwart Lim Kit Siang.

Batu Pahat loosely translated as chiselled rock is also the hometown of business tycoons like Country Heights Holdings Berhad founder Tan Sri Lee Kim Yew and Berjaya founder Tan Sri Vincent Tan, as well as bodybuilders Datuk Abdul Malek Noor and Sazali Samad.

A trading town since the 1800s, it is named the second most-developed district in the state after Johor Baru.

It is also renowned for products like coffee, wooden furniture, biscuits, fruits, arowana fish, *asam pedas* dish and salted fish.

Lea Husain, 32, whose family owns a coffee shop in Jalan Ibrahim, said her family was looking forward to seeing Najib in person.

"My whole family will gather at the shop to help out as we are expecting many people to visit the morning market to catch a glimpse of the Prime Minister," she said.

Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/4/5/nation/11043544&sec=nation>