

**PM: Pengerang to be major oil and gas hub in Asia Pacific**  
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PENGERANG: Southern Johor is poised to become a major oil and gas hub with the development of refineries by national oil company Petronas and a Taiwan-based petrochemical firm.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the Refinery and Petrochemical Integrated Development (RAPID) by Petronas along with the Taiwanese company would help bring in investments worth RM120bil within the next six years.

"These two projects are poised to make Pengerang a major oil and gas hub in the Asia Pacific," he said, adding that the project was three times bigger than the MRT project in the Klang Valley, which was valued at RM40bil to RM45bil.

Najib added that the RAPID project was larger than all the Petronas projects in Malaysia namely in Kertih, Gebeng and Malacca put together.

"These two refineries belonging to Petronas and the Taiwanese company will be able to produce 450,000 barrels of oil per day," he said at the launch of the RAPID project by Johor Ruler Sultan Ibrahim Ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar here on Sunday.

Najib added that the first phase of the project would cover 2,428ha with some 40,000 contract workers needed.

"Once operational, Petronas and the Taiwanese company will need about 5,000 highly skilled workers," he added.

Najib assured locals not to worry about their livelihood as all the necessary compensation would be paid to them. He said RM4.1mil in compensation have already been given to affected fishermen.

"The state government have also set up a task force headed by Johor Agriculture and Agro-based Committee chairman Datuk Aziz Kaprawi to help the relocation process of the villagers," he said.

He also presented RM1.24mil to Pengerang MP Datuk Seri Azalina Othman to be distributed as aid to repair 124 homes of fishermen in the area.

Najib said the government was also prepared to build a fishermen complex in the area and provide allocations to purchase boats, nets and engines for the fishermen.

He assured the locals that Petronas would carry out the necessary Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) as it would not want to tarnish its image.

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