

ECER attracting billions
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PUTRAJAYA: The East Coast Economic Region (ECER) has attracted RM37bil in investments so far and has created nearly 30,000 job opportunities, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

The Prime Minister said that in this year alone, RM12bil in investments were recorded.

He said the figure surpassed the target of RM10bil for the year.

"Of the committed investments, the logistics sector took 37.5% followed by tourism (27%), manufacturing (16.8%), property (10.4%) and agriculture (8.3%).

"I am pleased that the transformation of ECER has continued to show remarkable progress in terms of incoming investments, project implementation on the ground and socio-economic improvement among the locals.

"In addition, ECER has achieved the commendable feat of positioning itself as an attractive investment destination for high-technology sectors such as biotechnology, as reflected by the arrival of global industry players into the region," he said.

Najib said this in his opening remark before chairing the ECER meeting here yesterday.

He said that to date, the Government had allocated some RM2.6bil to implement 80 high impact projects and programmes in ECER under the Ninth and 10th Malaysia Plan.

They include the construction and upgrading of roads and water treatment plants as well as social development programmes such as empowerment to improve the academic performance and income of people in the region.

Among the notable projects sealed this year was the RM1.96bil investment by US-based biochemical Gevo Inc to develop a cellulosic biomass isobutanol plant in Kertih Biopolymer Park.

Another key project is the 685ha Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park (MCKIP) near Kuantan Port.

The MCKIP, the first bilateral project in Malaysia to be accorded national status, is expected to attract RM7.5bil worth of investment from local and international investors and create 5,500 job opportunities by 2020.

ECER Development Council chief executive officer Datuk Jebasingam Issace John said the ground-breaking ceremony of the park would be officiated by Najib and Chinese officials in the first quarter of next year.

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