

MCKIP officially open for business
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KUANTAN: With billions of ringgit in investments coming to life after just four months, the highly anticipated Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park (MCKIP) is now officially open for business.

[Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak](#) launched the park yesterday, made possible by Malaysia-China relations being on an "unprecedented high".

The park in Gebeng here is expected to be fully completed in two years. It has already attracted investment commitments worth RM10.5bil and will create 8,500 jobs.

Naib said it was the first industrial park in Malaysia to be accorded national status which will see it driven by the private sector but guided by the Government.

Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference of the People's Republic of China [chairman Jia Qinglin](#) attributed the park a sister project of the China-Malaysia Qinzhou Industrial Park (QIP) to the personal commitment of the two prime ministers and efforts of local governments and businesses of both countries.

"I am sure the two parks' development in future will be complementary and mutually reinforcing, and open a new chapter of friendship and co-operation between our two countries," said Jia at the launch.

Yesterday's event saw a slew of key documents signed and sealed to kick-start the investments, including the setting up of the MCKIP joint venture company between the Malaysian and Chinese consortium, as well as the project's financing.

There were also memorandums of understanding for a steel plant, an aluminium plant, a palm oil refinery as well as the expansion of the Kuantan Port.

Taking a leaf from ancient admiral Zheng He who arrived in Pahang 600 years ago, the industrial park will also leapfrog the Kuantan Port as the ideal gateway for regional trade on the side of east Malaysia.

Kuantan's location beside the South China Sea means it offers the quickest and most direct route to the major ports of the fast-developing Guangxi Beibu Gulf Economic Region.

The expansion project worth RM3bil to be spearheaded by [IJM Corporation Bhd](#) and [Guangxi Beibu International Port Group](#) will include a new deep-water terminal.

"It will ensure China and Malaysia remain closely connected at a time when the balance of global trade is tilting in Asia's direction," said Najib.

"With the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership set to bring half of the world's population within a single market, the importance of this connection will only increase," he added.

Najib also announced that both nations were finalising a programme that would see deeper cooperation and commitment to each other for the next five years.

The Five-Year Development Programme for Economic and Trade Cooperation is expected to be ready for consideration in the first quarter of this year and will map opportunities for cooperation between now and 2017, charting a clear course for future growth, he said.

“Over the past decade, the world has come to terms with a model where China's need for resources has created new patterns of trade and influence.

“Now the world is beginning to recognise that Chinese innovation and domestic demand will prove just as potent a force in the global economy,” said Najib.

“So on economic cooperation and diplomacy, I am proud to say that Malaysia is ahead of the curve.”

Malaysia has been China's top trading partner within Asean for five years in a row.

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