

World's biggest court complex ready in March

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Hamidah

■ **By V. Anbalagan**
anba@nst.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: Visualise this.

Courtrooms filled with toys and special cubicles for mothers to breast-feed their children.

This will be among the facilities at the world's largest court complex on Jalan Duta in Kuala Lumpur, scheduled to begin functioning in March.

Some of the courts will have facilities for witnesses to give evidence without having to face the accused.

Other features include closed-circuit television cameras installed along court corridors to ensure maximum security, a business centre, and a rest and recreation centre for court staff.

About 500 parking lots have been set aside for judicial officers and court staff, and a similar number for the public.

A mini park with facilities for children and adults will also be provided in the vicinity.

Remand prisoners and suspects will be taken to an underground holding-cell and led to the courtrooms via an exclusive passageway.

There is also a plan to set up a police station in the complex.

The RM300 million complex will have 77 courts.

There will be 30 High Courts, 21 Sessions Courts and 26 magistrate's courts on the 12ha site.

Of the 30 High Courts, four have been designated as non-Muslim family courts.

The complex brings together all courts in Kuala Lumpur which are now housed on Jalan Raja and at Wisma Denmark.

Deputy director-general of the Legal Affairs Division in the Prime Minister's Department, Hamidah Khalid, said construction was 97

per cent complete.

"Work to install and commission the electronic equipment at the complex is in the final stages before it is handed over to the judiciary," she said.

Work on the project started in March 2004 and was scheduled to be completed in February but the contractor was given an extension.

Hamidah expressed confidence that the complex would be people-friendly.

The complex took the lion's share of the Eighth Malaysia Plan allocation under which RM437 million was set aside to build new courts and renovate existing ones nationwide.

Former Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Radzi Sheikh Ahmad, who visited the project site last year, then described it as the "biggest court complex under one roof in the world".