

**VERBATIM: SPEECH BY YAB PRIME MINISTER AT THE  
LAUNCHING OF MAHARANI FREEPORT**

By : DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM

Venue : MUAR, JOHOR

Date : 29/11/2025

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**SPEECH BY**

**THE HONOURABLE YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM**

**PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA**

**THE LAUNCHING OF MAHARANI FREEPORT**

**29 NOVEMBER 2025 (SATURDAY) | 11.00AM**

**MUAR, JOHOR**

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh dan salam sejahtera.

*Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alamin,*

*Nahmaduhu wa nussalli ala Rasuluhil Karim,*

*Wa ala alihi wa sahbihi ajma'in*

**Mengadap Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Seri Paduka Baginda  
Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim;**

**Mengadap Duli Yang Amat Mulia Tunku Mahkota Ismail,  
Pemangku Sultan Johor;**

**Ampun Tuanku,**

**Patik dengan penuh takzimnya menjunjung kasih di atas  
perkenan Seri Paduka Baginda Tuanku berangkat bercemar duli  
ke Majlis Pelancaran Maharani Freeport.**

1. Sesungguhnya majlis ini unik, satu projek raksasa yang akan memberi faedah bukan sahaja kepada Johor, tetapi kepada Malaysia dan rantau ini.

2. Di bawah naungan Seri Paduka Baginda Tuanku, dalam beberapa tahun ini, Johor telah mencatat pembangunan, pertumbuhan yang sangat rancak dan patik bangga sebagai anak Malaysia bila melihat Johor dengan beberapa ikhtiar baru menjadi negeri yang paling ulung dari sudut pelaburan baru ke negeri Johor yang mengatasi semua negeri-negeri lain. Tahniah atas naungan Seri Paduka Baginda Tuanku.
  
3. Dengan pelancaran satu projek raksasa pada hari ini, ternyata Maharani Freeport akan bertapak sebagai satu lagi prakarsa ekonomi yang sangat strategik bagi negara kita dan bagi rantau kita. Dan ini melengkapi beberapa projek yang telah dilaksanakan di negeri Johor termasuk Zon Ekonomi Bebas Johor–Singapura, Forest City, lapangan terbang baharu yang akan diperbesarkan, Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) yang akan meletakkan Johor sebagai sebuah negeri dalam Malaysia yang akan muncul sebagai gergasi baru di rantau ini. Patik yakin, terutama di bawah naungan Seri Paduka Baginda Tuanku. Malah patik telah berbisik dengan Tuanku, Tuanku boleh, dengan kejayaan luar biasa Johor ini boleh menjengukkan Melaka dan Pulau Pinang selepas ini.

Ampun Tuanku,

Izinkan patik untuk menyampaikan sedikit pandangan kepada hadirin yang dimulihkan.

Menteri Besar, YAB Dato' Onn Hafiz bin Ghazi, YB Dato' Seri Haji Mohamed Khaled bin Nordin, rakan-rakan menteri, tetamu-tetamu yang dimuliakan.

4. Today's official launch of Maharani Freeport is alluded earlier a defining moment in the narrative of Malaysia's continuing journey as a maritime nation. This bold and visionary undertaking will give new shape to the economies not only of Johor and the region around it, but indeed of our entire nation and Southeast Asia.
5. The story of the Straits of Malacca and the great history of Johor-Riau Empire is in many ways a story of civilization itself. From the time of the Malay Archipelago's earlier sultanates through the era of spice trade, the straits did bear witness to the meeting of east and west, and of sea-borne merchants and inland empires.
6. That heritage is a reminder that Malaysia stands at a crossroads of civilization and commerce, and through the Maharani Freeport, we reaffirm our role as a bridge of culture and trade in the 21st century.
7. Maharani Freeport is a part of the overall strategic economic ecosystem built to serve global commerce, regional integration, and local prosperity.
8. Positioned at the southern gateway of the Straits of Malacca, this freeport occupies one with the most advantageous maritime locations

in the world. Every year, about one hundred thousand vessels pass through these waters, carrying close to one quarter of the world's seaborne oil trade and a substantial share of global commerce.

9. From this vantage point, Maharani Freeport is perfectly situated to serve as a central hub for transshipment, logistics, and regional trade, linking the economies of the Indo-Pacific with the markets of the Middle East and Europe.
10. We understand the enthusiasm and the support of the High Commissioners and Ambassadors because this specific project happens to be one of the pillars in our strategic policy to encourage, foster, and propel development in this country and the region.

Your Majesty and distinguished guests,

11. Despite the uncertainties that continue to shape the global economy, Malaysia's fundamentals remain strong. The government has projected a GDP growth of between 4.0 to 4.5% in 2026, and the third quarter results were beyond our original estimates of 4.8. It has reached 5 to 5.2%.
12. Now through Maharani Freeport and thanks again to Dato' Dr. Daing Malik and the team, we aim to strengthen these pillars by expanding our maritime capacity, enhancing our logistics competitiveness and deepening Malaysia's participation in global supply chains as well as

driving the nation closer to our economic targets by creating high value jobs, attracting billions of ringgit of foreign direct investment and encouraging the growth of industries that thrive on connectivity and innovation.

13. The Maharani Freeport will serve as a critical node in this network, a logistics and investment gateway that connects east and west through the Straits of Malacca, while improving supply reliability and reducing logistic costs. It will support greater supply chain resilience, encourage cross-border collaboration and make Malaysia as an essential part of the new economic architecture taking shape across Asia-Pacific.
14. Now, recognizing the Maharani Freeport's potential as a catalytic force for local economic development, the Government has approved a suit of tax incentives. That's what Daing Malik wants to hear.
15. Tax incentives to spur significant investments in the district of Muar, Johor and the outer region which includes the Datuk Seri Ab. Rauf, Melaka, of course.
16. Through the Ministry of Finance, incentives are extended to the master developer and to companies undertaking integration, integrated energy hub activities, deep-sea port operations and trade-related services.

17. In addition, tailored tax incentive packages are provided for supporting sectors including data centres, infrastructure and utilities, green technology, medical tourism and hospitality.
18. Yet, while we look outward to the world, we also look inward to our people for the community of Muar in the state of Johor.
19. May I would thank Dr. Daing Malik for the initiative to deal with the problem of the fishermen and people in the surrounding areas to the satisfaction of the community because that would sternly spearhead our MADANI understanding of development that do not ignore the plight of our community. Thank you again.
30. This from the people for the people project will create at least 45,000 employment opportunities, attract supporting industries and open doors for small and medium enterprises to participate in international commerce.
21. I must highlight this point because whilst we support mega projects such as this Maharani Project, we will not of course ignore the importance to spur the development and support for the SMEs.
22. Equally importance is our commitment to sustainability as we reclaim and reshape our coastline. We do so with a deep respect for the environment and for the generations to come.

23. This Maharani Freeport has been planned with environmental responsibility at its heart. Integrating green technologies, renewable energy systems and digital innovation to reduce emissions and enhance operational efficiency.

Your Majesty, ladies and gentlemen,

24. The launch of Maharani Free Port is verily an invitation to the world. We extend our warmest welcome to our international partners and investors. Malaysia offers not only opportunity, but stability, integrity and partnership.
25. This private-lead project, I must emphasize this point, it's lead to some confusion. This project is private driven. Government provide the basic infrastructure, the incentives and the support. Now, this project therefore would be inclusive, sustainable and deeply rooted in our shared heritage.
26. So, I wish to record my sincere appreciation, of course to Your Highness for his keenness, his advice and at times strong, I wouldn't say pressure; good advice to ensure that this project runs smoothly and protect the interests of Johor and the country. Menjunjung kasih Tuanku.

27. But of course, to the state government, the Ministry of Finance and all departments, Ministry of Transport that has worked together as a team to ensure that this project becomes a strategic national project.
28. I emphasize this point because to ensure that this is successful, we need a collaborative effort of the state government, federal government, all the relevant agencies to execute efficiently without delay.
29. **I am pleased to announce that on 28th November, we have gazetted Maharani Freeport status as free zones.**
30. So now, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. Maharani Freeport is now open for business.

Thank you.

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