

Impetus for growth

ENCOURAGING PLAN:

High-Speed Rail project near Pagoh Education Hub will boost development of university town

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A PLAN to bring the alignment of the High Speed Rail (HSR) project to a location near the Pagoh Education Hub will be an impetus for growth for the new university town.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said these and many new projects were encouraging as it would ensure steady growth of the township which is now under construction.

"After discussions with SPAD (Land Public Transport Commission), it has been agreed that the alignment will be moved to the Pagoh Education Hub.

"This will be an impetus for the rapid development of the Pagoh university town," he said after attending a briefing on development in the Pagoh parliamentary constituency by the Muar District Office and Muar Municipal Council.

It was previously reported that the proposed stops for the HSR would be Bandar Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), Seremban, Ayer Keroh (Malacca), Muar, Batu Pahat and Nusajaya (Johor), while in Sin-



Deputy Prime Minister **Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin** viewing a plan for the development of Pagoh university town in Johor, with Education Ministry secretary-general II **Datuk Seri Dr Zaini Ujang** yesterday. Pic by Syarafiq Abd Samad

gapore, the terminus would be in Jurong East.

The service would reduce the 350km journey between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore to 90 minutes, instead of five hours by road.

Muhyiddin said there was a high chance that a HSR station would be located near the Pagoh Education Hub as one of its proposals was to have a stop near Muar.

"The original plan (for the HSR) revealed that one of the stations would either be in Pagoh or Muar, and it would be near the Pagoh Education Hub.

"The project will be conducted by the HSR developer.

"I would be happy if it became a reality. The probability of it is

high," said Muhyiddin, who is Pagoh member of parliament.

He said Sime Darby, through its special purpose vehicle, Sime Darby Property Bhd, was the developer of the education hub and would undertake projects comprising housing and commercial units.

"It is important that other support facilities — public transportation, health services, police stations and social amenities — be set up here."

Muhyiddin said there were also proposals to bring in the Malaysia People's Housing Programme (PRIMA) into the area, as this would give added appeal to businesses and investors.

Earlier, Muhyiddin said the first phase of the Pagoh Education Hub would be completed ahead of schedule.

He said the first phase, which included campuses for Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and Politeknik Pagoh, was expected to begin operating by early next year, ahead of its intended May 2017 opening.

"It is an encouraging achieve-

ment for more foreign universities to come to the hub."

Muhyiddin said the government hoped that private higher learning institutions and foreign higher learning institutions would invest in Pagoh, in addition to focusing on the other education hub in Iskandar Malaysia.

He said the Pagoh Education Hub would create 25,000 new jobs.

He said it was also an achievement as the Imperial College of London, which was second in a ranking of the world's best universities, was collaborating with UTM to set up an automotive laboratory in Pagoh.

"I thank Education Ministry secretary-general II Datuk Seri Zaini Ujang for bringing the Imperial College of London to set up an automotive laboratory in collaboration with UTM here.

"I also laud the setting up of the School of Entrepreneurship by Proven Holdings Sdn Bhd to create a entrepreneurial ecosystem as a niche at the Pagoh Education Hub."

Muhyiddin also witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between representatives from UTM, UTHM, UIAM, the Education Ministry and Tunas Seletar Construction Sdn Bhd