

**SPEECH FOR MR. AHMAD KHAIRUDDIN  
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER II**

**THE GROWING AND EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES  
IN THE EAST COAST ECONOMIC REGION  
27 FEBRUARY 2020 (THURSDAY) | PERDANA HALL, LEVEL 10, MIDA**

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**Salutation**

**YBhg. Dato' Ragu Sampasivam**

Chief Operating Officer, East Coast Economic Region Development Council (ECERDC)

**Mr. Saifol Bahri Mohamad Shamlan**

General Manager, ECERDC

**Mr. Mohd Fhauzi Muridan**

Executive Director, UOB Malaysia

**Mr. Amir Al Fatakh Yusof**

Senior Vice President, UOB Malaysia

**Mr. Viknesh Selvanathan**

Managing Partner and Co-Founder, Viknesh & Yap Advocates & Solicitors

**Mr. Brent Yap**

Co-Founder, Viknesh & Yap, Advocates & Solicitors

**Mr. Earnest Wong**

Co-founder of Blue Duck Tech

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is my pleasure to welcome everyone to the Growing and Expanding Opportunities in the East Coast Economic Region event. Today, with our strategic partners - East Coast Economic Region Development Council (ECERDC), UOB Malaysia and Viknesh and Yap Law Firm, MIDA is proud to host this collaborative event to update our industry players on the latest policies, facilities and opportunities that are available in the east coast region.

2. This emerging region represents over 51 per cent of Peninsular Malaysia, covering the states of Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang and the district of Mersing in Johor. Guided by the ECER Master Plan and the close working relationship between the Federal and State Government, the region has seen tremendous economic development over the years.
3. As of June 2019, there are 334 manufacturing projects implemented in the East Coast Region, involving investments of RM34.6 billion. Of this, 63.3 per cent of the value is derived from foreign sources and are mainly in industries for petroleum products (including petrochemicals), basic metals, chemicals and chemical products, electrical and electronics (E&E) products as well as rubber products. These projects have been instrumental in creating over 33,000 job opportunities in the country.
4. Among the notable companies operating in the East Coast Region include the DRB HICOM, Mercedes Benz Malaysia, Alliance Steel, CJ Bio Malaysia, Arkema Thiochemicals, Petronas, ROHM-Wako Electronics (Malaysia) and Genting Group. Companies such as this hold much promise for further business collaborations and opportunities for local businesses, especially with the development of the ECRL project.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. As most of us are aware, the 640-kilometre ECRL rail project is expected to be completed by December 2026, with the realigned track passing through 20 stations that will span from Kota Bharu (Kelantan) through to Port Klang (Selangor).
6. Given its vast coverage area and promising economic opportunities, MIDA has established a dedicated East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) team in May last year. This focal team is responsible to facilitate and promote the development of the Economic Accelerator Projects (EAP) along the ECRL corridor.
7. I am proud to share that MIDA's ECRL team is currently engaging with the respective states and interested parties to inform and promote the EAPs. The EAPs will include the development of industrial parks in the East Coast and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia to attract trade and investments along the ECRL corridor, from both local and international investors alike.

8. MIDA is optimistic that through the EAPs, this rail project will contribute towards bridging the development gap between the east and west coasts of Peninsular Malaysia, given the potential growth for industrial, commercial and tourism sectors in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. MIDA is committed to attracting quality investments that complement the growth and advancement of our local businesses. Through initiatives such as internships, vendor programmes and strategic localisation initiatives, local players are encouraged to step up to fill the gaps within the business ecosystems.
10. Our team in the SME Investment Desk has also been passionately organising regular domestic investment seminars and forums covering topics such as automation technology, talent development, funding assistance and market access. This is crucial to ensure our local stakeholders are equipped to be competitive in today's marketplace.
11. MIDA is aware of the financial commitments faced by our local stakeholders, hence, various initiatives such as Pioneer Status, Investment Tax Allowance, Automation Capital Allowance and grants such as the Domestic Investment Strategic Fund (DISF) and Digital Transformation Acceleration Programme (DTAP) are provided to facilitate eligible companies to grow their businesses.
12. Simultaneously, our very own Investment Coordination Platform (ICP) unit, the team behind today's event, has been working closely with local regulators, technology providers as well as equity and corporate advisory firms to facilitate local companies to grow their investment portfolios.
13. To date, over 160 companies and 50 strategic technology and funding partners have benefited from the unit's facilitation in setting up business-to-business matching and capital raising exercises.

Ladies and gentlemen,

14. MIDA assures there are ample opportunities for existing companies in Malaysia to reinvest, diversify and expand into new growth areas. As such, please do leverage on the insightful line-up of speakers today that will cover a range of topics such as Economic Accelerator Projects (EAPs) in East Coast Rail Link

(ECRL), Robust Business and Investment opportunities in East Coast Economic Region (ECER), Financial Tool for Business Growth through Islamic Banking and Business Legal Framework.

15. Before I end, thank you to all the speakers and everyone involved in making this event a success today. I wish you all a productive day ahead.