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THE MALAYSIAN RESERVE
TARIKH : 24 JANUARI 2022 (ISNIN)

The Malaysian Reserve

**Drone Test Site to attract RM351m investments,
create 1,000 jobs**



Monday, January 24th, 2022 at [News](#) | [Technology](#)

The site is also in line with DRZ Iskandar's vision to spur the local economy, benefitting surrounding communities and entrepreneurs, Johor MB says

by SHAFIQQUL ALIFF / Pic by BERNAMA

ISKANDAR Investment Bhd (IIB) has opened South-East Asia's largest Drone Test Site (DTS) at Medini Iskandar Malaysia which is expected to bring in RM351 million investments and generate 1,000 high-value jobs by 2025 in drone and robotics.

IBB said it aims to create a drone and robotics eco-system in Iskandar Puteri, which will become a growth engine, technology leader and talent hub for Malaysia and the Asia-Pacific.

It added that the DTS is in line with the Drone and Robotics Zone Iskandar's (DRZ Iskandar) vision to spur the local economy, benefitting surrounding communities and entrepreneurs.

Johor Menteri Besar (MB) Datuk Hasni Mohammad said the state government welcomes all drone technology players in Malaysia and the region to set up their businesses at DRZ Iskandar, and that the initiative will attract emerging tech talents, gig economy workers and contribute towards new job creation for Johoreans.

He stated that IIB has spent close to RM4 million since the inception of DRZ Iskandar and the state government has also allocated a sizable budget for the development of the drone and robotics eco-system.

"I am pleased that IIB has managed to strengthen Medini's position as Johor's digital hub with the opening of this DTS.

"The state government will continue to facilitate all related initiatives for DRZ Iskandar as we move forward with the state's overall digital economy agenda," he said in a recent statement.

Meanwhile, IBB president and CEO Datuk Khairil Anwar Ahmad said IIB continues to drive the government's aspiration in the development of technology and digitalisation, especially drone technology as they work closely with major industry players, such as DHL Express Malaysia, which has played a significant role in developing the local drone community.

"The opening of the DTS, which spans more than 688ha in DRZ Iskandar is one of the key elements in supporting the realisation of Johor's digital economy agenda.

"We want to provide our innovators with a holistic environment where they can validate their products, obtain funding, gain procurement access and regulatory clarity which will encourage the development of innovative and creative drone solutions," he added.

DRZ Iskandar was launched in December 2020, and aims to provide a safe and real environment for innovators to test, fly, learn and try out new ways for unmanned aircraft to be integrated into the skies.

DTS has two sites measuring approximately 10ha (DTS 1), which caters for "visual line of sight" flights and 688ha (DTS 2) for "beyond visual line of sight" flights, the first of its kind in Malaysia.

Both are the main components of DRZ Iskandar for the National Technology and Innovation Sandbox (NTIS) with enhanced regulations which act as a testbed for novice technology solutions to take off and fly, recognised by the Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry.

Khairil Anwar said this supportive environment would not only fast-track the testing of locally developed drone-powered solutions in NTIS but would also elevate Malaysia's visibility in the regional and global drone tech industry.

