

Matrade envisions 'little Dubai' in LD

KOTA KINABALU: Sabah Director of Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) Ravidran Manogaran said strategic branding and promotion can help Lahad Datu and the east coast of Sabah achieve their development and economic goals.

He said this during a courtesy call on POIC Sabah Sdn Bhd at the latter's office here recently.

POIC Sabah is a state-owned company developing the 4,400-acre industrial park known as Lahad Datu palm oil industrial cluster, or POIC Lahad Datu.

Much of the proposed development activities particularly in building connectivity and economic activities with the surrounding region are centred in or around POIC.

POIC Lahad Datu's progress since its founding in 2005, as well as the roles it is expected to play in a proposed international airport, a maritime centre, and a regional logistics hub for the BIMP-EAGA region, was briefed to Ravidran, who was previously attached to Matrade's Central, West South Asia, and Africa desk.

He likened Lahad Datu's vision to that of a "little Dubai" (referring to the Emirati metropolis that expanded from a desert village to a global centre for investment, tourism, trade, and supply chain) in the making, which he believes



Gan (sixth from left) presenting a token to Ravidran.

will be realised through well-thought-out branding initiatives.

"Matrade encourages POIC Sabah to promote its facilities and services to potential strategic partners throughout the world through Matrade's 46 overseas offices," Ravidran said.

Ravidran's arrival earlier was greeted by POIC Sabah Chief Executive Officer Datuk Fredian Gan and his senior officers.

POIC Sabah has been strengthening its network building with ports across the world in recent years to encourage

cargo flow and increase logistics businesses in POIC Lahad Datu, which has a comprehensive set of port facilities and a deep-water harbour, according to Gan.

According to him, the new narrative now is to look at POIC Lahad Datu and the neighbouring BIMP-EAGA regions as a whole, with their rich resources, 78 million people, and considerable economic contribution to Asean.

"We look forward to working with Matrade and your officers worldwide, the spread the news about the many investment opportunities we offer," he added.