

Better planning

Sultan wants state to conduct research before approving projects

By **MOHD FARHAAN SHAH**
metrose@thestar.com.my



MERSING: Johor Ruler Sultan Ibrahim Ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar wants the government to conduct proper studies before approving any development projects.

He singled out a primary school in Pulau Aur where there were only eight pupils with 10 teachers, saying that the location of the building did not make sense.

"The school alone costs about RM8mil to build when the pupils should be placed in a school on the mainland.

"I am willing to give them (the students) a scholarship," he said before launching the Mersing District Council office here on Sunday.

Sultan Ibrahim also said that Mersing has a lot of potential especially in terms of tourism, but development in the area was quite slow compared to other districts in Johor.

He added that the district is rich with natural resources and beautiful islands that are able to attract tourists.

"I received information that logging activities in Gunung Arong have been going on without control and I have instructed that such projects be stopped immediately.

"There is also illegal gold mining activities being conducted here and I urge the authorities to take stern action against those involved no matter their political affiliation," he said.

Sultan Ibrahim also said that Mersing held a special place in his heart as he spent much of his childhood in the district.

Besides saying that Mersing should be



New building: Johor Ruler Sultan Ibrahim Ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar (second from right) walking with Mentri Besar Datuk Mohamed Khaled Nordin (left) and state exco committee member Datuk Latiff Bandi (right) after visiting the Mersing District Council office here in Mersing. – Photo by ABDUL RAHMAN EMBONG

developed into a tourism hub, the Sultan also urged his subjects to keep the district, especially the beaches, clean and hoped a good public transportation system could be implemented to boost tourism.

"The Sultan Iskandar Marine Park here for instance should be promoted as an eco-tour-

ism spot where courses can be conducted for the staff and local fishermen.

"Those living on the islands should be roped in as marine park volunteers," he said, adding that those who become volunteers should receive petrol and boat engines from the state government.