

## KERATAN AKHBAR



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JERAI Geopark has been proclaimed as a National Geopark in conjunction with the coronation of the 29th Sultan of Kedah Sultan Sallehuddin Ibtisam Almarhum Sultan Badlishah on Oct 22.

The proclamation was made by Sultan Sallehuddin at the foot of Mount Jerai, Guar Chempedak near Yan.

Also present were the Sultanah of Kedah Sultanah Maliha Tengku Arifi, Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir, and state Industrial and Investment and Local Government and Housing Committee chairman Tan Kok Yew who is also Jeral Geopark Proclamation Ceremony Working Committee chairman.

Meanwhile, Water, Land and Natural Resources Minister Dr Xavier Jayakumar in his speech said Jerai was successfully certified as a National Geopark last year after 18 months of work, starting with a geopark development survey in 2016 led by the Geoscience Department of Kedah, Perlis and Penang.

"The ministry, as the National Geopark Committee chairman, welcomes the efforts in the creation of a geopark in our country that is of particular importance to sustainable development," he said. Dr Xavier said the Federal Government had allocated RM10.7mil in the 11th Malaysia Plan for Geopark Development Potential Assessment Projects for the preservation and conservation of natural resources.

"From that amount, RM685,000 has been channelled to the Kedah, Perlis and Penang Geoscience Department in 2017 and 2018 for the implementation of a complete and detailed study and research on geological aspects," he said.

Commenting further, Dr Xavier said Geopark was a term used to describe the concept of sustainable development that stressed on the conservation of

# Towering natural wonder declared National Geopark

It is chosen for its geodiversity and high geological heritage value

natural heritage resources, while upholding history and culture as well as boosting local economic activities.

He said the Jerai Geopark, covering an area of 800sq km encompassing two districts, namely Yan and Kuala Muda, was chosen for geopark development because it was scientifically located in the high rock geodiversity area of the Jerai formation, Mahang formation and Jerai granite.

"The Jerai formation with a rock age of about 550 million years is at the highest level of 1,217 metres from the sea level, making Mount Jerai unique with a very high geological heritage value.

"The outcropping of the Jerai granite has shaped the landscape of Jerai which impresses the views of visitors passing the area.

"Even Jerai has been a trade route guide since the golden age of the old Kedah civilisation.

"The geological and archaeological evidence shows the progress of the iron-based industry in Jerai, which became the focus of trade and the world's supply of iron at that time.

"In addition, the biological diversity, namely, the richness of flora and fauna at different altitudes, also complements Jerai as a potential geopark to be recognised as a global geopark in the future," he said. — Bernama



Sultan Sallehuddin (centre) and Sultanah Maliha (left) listening to an explanation on the formation of some rocks by Puncak Permata Rezeki managing director Aniza Saadudin during the proclamation ceremony.



Sultan Sallehuddin (centre) holding the Jerai Geopark book at the event. With him are Sultanah Maliha (second from right), Mukhriz (third from left) and Dr Xavier (right). — Photos: Bernama