

134 squatters hit by rail project to get RM5 million

■ **By Lee Keng Fatt**
news@nst.com.my

GEORGE TOWN: The New Year has brought timely cheer to the 134 squatters on the mainland affected by the Ipoh-Padang Besar electrified rail double-tracking project.

The Federal Government yesterday announced that it would pay more than RM5 million as goodwill payment to them.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Ong Tee Keat said the payment would be made as soon as possible.

"For house owners living on their own land, the goodwill payment is being processed and will be disbursed soon," Ong said in a statement here yesterday.

He added that where applica-

ble, the payment would be made together with the compensation under the Land Acquisition Act 1960.

He said the majority of the affected residents in Kedah and Perak had received their goodwill payments.

"The government has taken into account the interests of all the residents directly affected by the project. The appeals and feedback from community leaders and Barisan Nasional component party leaders in Penang have been considered."

The RM12.485 billion project is scheduled for completion at the end of 2012.

Work on the project by MMC-Gamuda JV is in progress in Perak, Kedah, Penang and Perlis.