

Pak Lah: Ties won't be affected

HELSINKI: Malaysia-Singapore relations should not be affected by the recent decision to scrap the bridge project to replace the Johor Causeway, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

He said this after a four-eyed meeting with his Singaporean counterpart Lee Hsien Loong on the sidelines of the Sixth Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem 6) here.

"The meeting is about our bilateral relations, with the hope that it will not be affected by the

recent decision not to go ahead with the bridge project," he told Malaysian journalists yesterday.

Abdullah also explained to Lee the RM15bil Southern Johor development corridor project.

He told Lee that Malaysia planned to develop the region along the lines of China's Shenzhen Economic Zone.

He said unlike in the past, the southern region would see rapid economic development that would attract massive invest-

ments from other countries.

On his meeting with British Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, he said Malaysia would like to see more British students pursuing their higher education in Malaysia.

Abdullah also held talks with his Italian counterpart Romano Prodi, and they explored opportunities, for greater co-operation in various fields such as the economy, human capital development and tourism.