

**JOHOR BARU:** The South Johor Economic Region (SJER) will turn Johor into a metropolis on par with Hongkong and Shenzhen in China, and put Malaysia on the world map, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi yesterday.

He said the SJER, to be developed by the government's, investment arm, Khazanah Nasional, is expected to experience robust development and modernisation, and help spur the country's economy in the future.

"The huge development and investment in the SJER, I believe, will make Johor a major metropolis, in Malaysia, Southeast Asia, East Asia and the world, and on par with Hongkong and Shenzhen on the mainland China.

"Through the SJER, Johor will be known on the world map," he told about 5,000 people who

# Johor to become metropolis: PM

welcomed him at the Senai Airport at the start of a one-day visit.

Willi the government's plan to carry out massive development in southern Johor under the SJER development programme, the

strategic area, the prime minister said, would also emerge as the country's economic booster in the future.

Abdullah said the government sincerely hoped the SJER development plan would be well received by Johoreans.

He presented the government's plan for the southern Johor area to the Sultan of Johor at Istana Bukit Serene yesterday afternoon.

He said rural areas, the entrepreneurs and the bumiputra community would also be involved in the SJER so that "all levels of society would enjoy progress under the development plan.

Abdullah said that besides the SJER, the government would also

develop several other development corridors like the northern regions of Peninsular Malaysia, covering Perlis, Renang and north Perak, which would be developed by Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB).

The East Coast development corridor covering Kelantan, Terengganu and east Pahang would be developed by the national oil and gas corporation, Petronas.

"All these are my plans, not other people's plans," he said.

Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman said the Johor people had given a very big mandate to Abdullah to lead the country and therefore, the Johor people would stand strong behind his leadership. Bernama