

# Goh and Abdullah To Meet in Johor

Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong has accepted an invitation from his Malaysian counterpart, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, to attend a January 25 Lunar New Year open house. The meeting is to be held in Johor Baru, the city on the Malaysian side of the causeway linking the two countries, and hosted by Abdullah. This will be the first meeting on either leader's home territory since Abdullah took office on October 31 (the pair met at an Asean gathering in Tokyo in mid-December). The Johor meeting, which will also feature senior cabinet ministers from both countries, may be a prelude to an expected reconciliation after a stormy one-year period between the neighbours. Top of the agenda is likely to be the proposed new causeway to which Singapore has objected. Former Premier Mahathir Mohamad got around that by ordering a "crooked" bridge, whereby the Malaysian half of the causeway would be demolished and replaced by a sweeping, overhead, steeply curved bridge that would allow ships to pass underneath. According to officials familiar with its construction, Abdullah has told the bridge's builder to "go slow" on the project. The officials also say that Abdullah will press for a straight overhead bridge to be built by both countries.