

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	07 DECEMBER 2016

# Najib pays tribute to Pak Lah for establishing region

NST-7/12/2016

**ISKANDAR PUTERI:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak paid tribute to former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for having the foresight to establish the Iskandar Malaysia economic region during the latter's tenure.

He said Abdullah, or Pak Lah as he is affectionately known, was the driving force behind the idea to develop the economic region in southern Johor 10 years ago.

"The person behind the idea to develop Iskandar Malaysia was none other than Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi during his tenure as prime minister.

"Where credit is due, credit is given. I continue the legacy of my predecessor Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, and today, we express our utmost appreciation to Pak Lah.

"Above all, Pak Lah has shown how a former prime minister should behave.

"Thank you, Pak Lah... That's a hidden message," Najib said to a round of applause from the thousands of people who attended the 10th anniversary celebration of Iskandar Malaysia at the EduCity Sports Complex here yesterday.

Abdullah attended the event with other dignitaries, including Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Khaled Nordin and former Johor menteri besar Tan Sri Abdul Ghani Othman.

Najib's praise for Abdullah was in



Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Najib Razak** and former PM **Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi** (sixth from left) with Khazanah Nasional Bhd managing director **Tan Sri Azman Mokhtar** (third from left), Iskandar Regional Development Authority chief executive **Datuk Ismail Ibrahim** (fifth from left), Johor Menteri Besar **Datuk Seri Khaled Nordin** (fourth from right) and award recipients at the Iskandar Malaysia's 10th anniversary celebration yesterday. Pic by Mohd Azren Jamaludin

stark contrast to the critical words he had for another former prime minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

At a press conference later, Najib expressed his disappointment with

Dr Mahathir over the latter's false claim that the Forest City in Iskandar Malaysia would bring 700,000 Chinese citizens into Johor to be made Malaysian citizens.

"The Johor menteri besar has re-

sponded to the claim. It is an unsubstantiated claim. He (Dr Mahathir) should not be scaring people off from a project that will give huge returns in employment, tourism and other fields," said Najib.

Najib said the success of Iskandar Malaysia was due to the cooperation between the federal and state governments, and this continued cooperation would bring the economic region to a higher level in the future.