

GEMAS-JOHOR BARU LINE LAUNCH

'PUTRAJAYA NO LONGER DICTATING FROM CENTRE'

Johor's performance is outcome of aligning national plans with local realities, says PM

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PUTRAJAYA has recalibrated the way national development is conceived and executed — by listening to the states first rather than dictating from the centre, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday.

He said top-down assumptions belonged to an era than Malaysia had outgrown.

Speaking at the launch of the Gemas-Johor Baru electrified double-track line, Anwar said the new federal approach ensured development plans were shaped by real needs on the ground, not paper-work fantasies.

Johor, he said, stood as proof of what could happen when national and state administrations moved in tandem.

The state's investment performance, he said, had been so strong that potential investments were expected to surpass RM100 billion — a new record — reflecting investors' confidence in its growth momentum as well as the stability of the national economy under the Madani framework.

"This is the outcome of listening, of respecting state priorities and aligning national plans with local realities," he said. "It marks a major shift from past practices, where federal assumptions drove everything."

Anwar said federal-state coordination was embedded into policymaking for the upcoming 13th Malaysia Plan (2026-2030), with several federal priorities already adjusted after input from Johor

— a model he called essential to democratic governance.

"No federal or state government has all the answers."

On the newly operational Gemas-Johor Baru line, he said modern transport networks must serve as catalysts, not trophies.

Each station along the line, he added, would anchor new commercial activity through transit-oriented developments that integrated economic centres, housing, food courts, small-business spaces and community facilities.

"This is not just rail engineering. It is an economic strategy," he said. "Every station must become a growth hub that creates jobs and protects opportunities for small traders."

He said mega-projects could succeed only when the benefits flowed beyond the headlines and reached ordinary Malaysians.

He hailed the Gemas-Johor Baru line as a model of disciplined execution and modernisation, saying the project symbolised both Johor's rise and Malaysia's broader economic renewal.

"This is a proud moment for Johor, and for the nation," he said, thanking Regent of Johor Tunku Mahkota Ismail for presiding over the ceremony.

Meanwhile, Anwar said Malaysia-Singapore relations were now at their "strongest in years", with the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone poised to attract more high-value investors.

His recent working visit to Singapore, he said, focused on accelerating this cross-border economic engine.

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