

# River restoration project a game-changer for JB

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Sungai Segget rejuvenation project, which is part of the RM20 billion plan to transform Johor Baru's old city into a world-class metropolis, is a game-changer.

Iskandar Regional Development Authority (Irda) chief executive officer Datuk Ismail Ibrahim said the project would transform the river and the adjacent Jalan Wong Ah Fook into a vibrant area.

He told the *New Straits Times* that it would also make Johor Baru a sustainable city by providing economic activities, lifestyle and amenities that were in line with the Johor Baru City Council, Irda and Iskandar Malaysia's vision.

The estimated cost to rejuvenate the 1.3km-long and 25m-wide river is RM240 million.

The project is similar to the Cheonggyecheon river restoration in Seoul, South Korea, which underwent a 386 billion won (RM1.38 billion) facelift in 2003.

An elevated highway over the polluted Cheonggyecheon river was demolished and replaced with a 5.76km restored stream with parallel roadways, improving the area's environment and beauty.

The restoration process had provided huge boosts to local biodiversity and catalysed the city's economic development.

Ismail said the works at Sungai



**Datuk Ismail Ibrahim**

*The Sungai Segget rejuvenation project is similar to the Cheonggyecheon river restoration in Seoul, South Korea. (Inset) Iskandar Regional Development Authority chief executive officer **Datuk Ismail Ibrahim** says the project will make **Johor Baru** a vibrant city.*

Segget, which was once a busy trading port, was vital for the city's future.

The project started more than a year ago and consists of two packages. Package 1 involves the development of the Sungai Segget Integrated Water Treatment Plant while

Package 2 is to develop a mitigation and sewerage system.

Ismail said the final stage of the project would be carried out under Package 3. Package 3 involves the beautification of Sungai Segget and upgrading of Jalan Wong Ah Fook.

"Once completed, Sungai Segget

and Jalan Wong Ah Fook will turn into the new green lung in Johor Baru city centre," he said.

Ismail said to ensure that Sungai Segget was well maintained, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) would be set up.

"This SPV is required for the main-

tenance of facilities to ensure that the river system meets the objective of being clean and flood-free.

"The SPV may involve the state government and Irda. Nonetheless, it is still in its initial stage. Once everything is ready, an announcement on this will be made," he said.