

## KERATAN AKHBAR

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### Rafizi: Johor-Singapore economic zone bigger than any one minister or government



*Partners Dialogue: Advancing Facilitation at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, May 19, 2025. — Picture by Firdaus Latif*

By Syed Jaymal Zahiid

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KUALA LUMPUR, May 19 — Economy Minister Datuk Seri Rafizi Ramli today sought to assure investors of Putrajaya's commitment to the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone (JS-SEZ), saying its importance transcended individual leaders or administrations.

The pledge comes ahead of a key election in PKR where Rafizi is facing a challenge for the deputy presidency; the minister previously suggested he could leave the Cabinet if he does not defend his position successfully.

Addressing business delegates at a JS-SEZ partners dialogue held at the Mandarin Oriental here today, Rafizi vowed policy continuity for the economic zone, regardless of who governs or might replace him.

"I think many of you might be questioning the future prospects of JS-SEZ. If it will continue to be a priority in

the coming years, and if activity will continue to rise. The last thing we need is for all the momentum, attention, and excitement to go to waste,” he said.

“What I will say is this. Policy continuity should never depend on the sitting administration of the day. On the whims and desires of individual politicians,” the minister added.

“I know time here is temporary and there will eventually be another minister of economy to replace me. However, I am assured by this. JS-SEZ, in many ways, is a promise to the future.”

Putrajaya and Singapore signed an agreement in January for the JS-SEZ to promote and facilitate investments across 11 sectors: manufacturing, logistics, food security, tourism, energy, digital economy, green economy, financial services, business services, education and health.

The economic zone will span 3,571 sq km in southern Johor and comprise nine “flagship areas” catering to the different economic sectors.

The Anwar administration is expected to present a blueprint for the project that Rafizi said would provide a comprehensive roadmap outlining the long-term vision, strategic aspirations, and investment opportunities for the economic zone.

The JS-SEZ had been touted as the country’s next main economic driver, potentially rivalling the Klang Valley in GDP terms.

“Think of it as a one-stop document for potential investors, policymakers, and the general public,” he said.

To date, six major local and international banks have signed letters of intent (LOIs) with the MoE to help draw investments to the JS-SEZ, with RM2.35 billion in investment interest already secured.

“With banks being the conduits of capital, their presence is critical to galvanising private-sector participation through the pooling of capital and commerce,” Rafizi said.

“Having the buy-in from these anchors of the financial system is perhaps the best show of progress and belief in the JS-SEZ to date.”