

It's the real thing soon

Coca-Cola firms up plans in four months to set up RM1bil plant

By **SARBAN SINGH**

newsdesk@thestar.com.my

NILAI: Giant conglomerate Coca-Cola took only four months after discussions with the Prime Minister to firm up plans to set up a RM1bil plant in Malaysia.

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said this would help bolster Malaysia's image as a favourite foreign investment destination.

He conducted the ground-breaking ceremony for the company at Bandar Estek here yesterday.

"We promised them all the support that we could give, and the incentives as well, during discussions in Singapore. I am proud that we have been able to make this a reality within

four months," he said, adding that the investment would be made over a five-year period.

Najib had met officials from the company at the sidelines of the Apec CEO summit in Singapore last November.

He said Malaysia was proud to be associated with the globally-recognised brand which first made its presence here in 1979.

"Coca-Cola has been a global household name for a long time ... I still remember a movie (*The God's Must Be Crazy*) where a Coca-Cola bottle fell from the sky.

"It could have been any bottle ... but it was a Coca-Cola bottle," he said to loud applause from the crowd.

Najib was also pleased to note that the state-of-the-art plant would be one of the

most eco-friendly in this part of the world.

The "green" plant would be built based on the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design) certification which was an international standard for eco-friendly buildings.

The 123,024sq m facility, built on land-acquired from TH Properties, is expected to start operations before the end of next year.

Earlier, Coca Cola Company president (Pacific group) Glenn Jordan said the investment in Bandar Enstek was the company's biggest ever made in Malaysia.

This new investment, he said, would create between 600 and 800 jobs within the plant and 8,000 more jobs at the supplier and distributor levels.