

# Birch House's new role

■ **By Tan Cheng Yean.**

PENANG Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Abdul Rahman Abbas visited Birch House, a century-old building in Jalan Dato Keramat, George Town, Penang, recently.

During the visit, Abdul Rahman launched Birch House as the corporate head office of Penang-based developer Ivory Properties Group.

Also present were Ivory Properties managing director Datuk Low Eng Hock, its director Datuk Nazir Ariff and general manager and director Chok Keng Vui.

Birch House was once the head office for Escoy Holdings Berhad (formerly known as The Eastern Smelting Company).

Tin smelting started on this site in 1898 and continued for the next 100 years.

In 1908, a house was built by Lee Chin Ho next to the smelter and was named Birch House in honour of his friend and chairman of the then Eastern Smelting



Abdul Rahman at the launch of Birch House.

Company and one-time Resident of Perak, Sir Ernest Birch. Owing to the declining

availability of tin concentrates, a decision was made to close the smelting plant in 1998.