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A massive trade show

THIS month, Malaysia plays host to a historic event. For the first time, a nation outside the Middle East will host the 10th Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit. Alongside the historic international gathering, the nation's administrative capital of Putrajaya will also be home to the Expo OIC 2003.

The six day international trade from Oct 14 to 19 is set to be a major event, especially for corporations targeting to make inroads into the Middle East market. An added dimension to the event is the presence of non-OIC member countries.

The expo, organised by F & R Exhibition and Conference Sdn Bhd, has attracted participations from some 30 OIC country-members and a new non-OIC members like China. 'F&R is proud be given the privilege to take up the challenge of attracting as many OIC participants to be a part of yet another history in the making for Malaysia and also contribute in the Government's pursuit to uphold peace and dignity of Islamic nations throughout the world,' says F&R executive director Datuk Rosle Jaamat.

Many of the exhibitors agree that Expo OIC 2003 is the perfect opportunity to market their products and services to the different OIC member countries as well as to the non-OIC members. They will be showcasing their expertise in architecture, calligraphy, fine art, philosophy, trade, science, medicine, education, heavy industries as well as others.

The participants confirmed are from the small and medium industries to the bigger corporations and government organisations. Among the exhibitors are Elitkraf Sdn Bhd, Arus Andaman, AIN Medicare, Bateel Asia, Innovation Associates, Ashtec Holdings Sdn Bhd, Dawama Sdn Bhd, Business Series Sdn Bhd, Emas Sekawan Sdn Bhd, Malaysia Venture Capital Management Bhd, Sapura Telecommunications Bhd, PJS Industries, Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd (Proton), Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism, Persatuan Pengusaha Melayu and a number of state governments.

To date, through F&R Exhibition's extensive marketing efforts, the Expo has attracted over 30 OIC member countries. China, a non-OIC member country, has also confirmed its participation. Most of these countries participating will also be given the opportunity to present to the crowd their culture through cultural shows that have been scheduled throughout the six days.

'Many of these countries are very excited to show the richness and authenticity of their traditions and culture in music, fashion as well as art,' says Rosle. He added that the organiser has received positive response from countries such as Pakistan, China, Qatar, Kuwait, Brunei, Indonesia and Iran. Also showing keen interest are Turkey, Sudan, Bangladesh, Kyrgyz and Turkeministan.

As with most major trade shows, groups taking part will look forward to conducting other activities such as business matching meetings, product presentations as well as the possibility of attending some conferences which will be held in conjunction with the Expo.

One such event running over two days, on 15 and 16 Oct, is organised by Islamic World Expo & Conference (ISWEC). There will be four conferences running concurrently catering for different categories: Islamic banking and finance; education; health and E-Government.

Apart from that, there will also be a one-day conference on Islamic

Banking in the ASEAN Region.

Some other highlights apart from the show and the business matching meetings which will be coordinated by the organiser and the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade), are cultural performances by cultural groups of the various participating countries, product presentations, conferences, official product launches as well as luncheon and hi-teas.

Expo OIC 2003 will be officially launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Oct 14. It is expected to attract 50,000 international traders, 100,000 local traders and about 100,000 public visitors.

The Expo's three main sponsors are Dinar Dirham International, Umrah.com and Takaful Ikhlas. Malaysian Business is the Expo's official publication.

Among other official sponsors contributing to the Expo OIC 2003 are Petronas as the official fuel sponsor, AmBank Group as the official bank, Telekom Malaysia Bhd as official communications provider, Malaysia Airlines as the official airline and Express Rail Link Sdn Bhd as the official air-rail provider.

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