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Putrajaya stands as one of Dr Mahathir's legacies to the nation

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PUTRAJAYA invokes in one a feeling of pride with its imposing buildings and modern facilities.

It evokes a melancholic feeling as well, as the person responsible for the development of the city, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, will step down from his post at the end of the month.

Delegates attending the 10th OIC summit at the ultra-modern Putrajaya Convention Centre (PCC) are impressed with the breathtaking view of the new administrative capital of Malaysia.

A delegate from an Arab country, while enjoying the views from the open balcony on the third floor of the PCC, remarked that it was unbelievable for a small Muslim country like Malaysia to develop a city that matches those in developed nations.

Putrajaya, covering an area of 4,931 hectares, is indeed a great achievement for Malaysia in particular, and the Muslim world at large.

Situated 25km south of Kuala Lumpur, and with the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) only 20km away in Sepang, it is a city within a luscious garden and embedded with smart and futuristic features.

It is built within the 15km by 50km Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), which stretches from the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) to KLIA in Sepang, and has a high-capacity, fully digital telecommunications infrastructure as its backbone.

About a decade ago, the area was an oil palm plantation and swamp forest.

Many of the buildings have now been completed. Ministries and government agencies, which have shifted to the city, are among the first to use the latest multimedia technologies for inter-department communications and interactions with the public.

Another outstanding feature lies in Putrajaya's bridges.

Each of the eight bridges has a distinctive feature - from the Putra bridge that was inspired by the famous Khaju Bridge in Isfahan, Iran, to the magnificent cable-stayed Seri Wawasan bridge with its steel structures gleaming under the sun.

"The bridges show how creative the Malaysians are," said another delegate, who was also amazed with the fact that the city was developed in less than 10 years.

For regular visitors to Malaysia, particularly those who participated in international forums held in Kuala Lumpur, the opportunity to join the 10th OIC Summit at PCC is an exhilarating experience.

Most of them are impressed with the world-class facilities provided at the convention centre, in which the building takes the shape of the unique wau bulan (moon kite) and the exquisite pending perak (silver royal belt buckle).

Situated atop a commanding hill in Precinct 5, the PCC faces the Perdana Putra building, which houses the Prime Minister's Office.

From the open balconies of the PCC, one can see the Perdana Putra at the other end and the sprawling city at another.

"It will become a wonderful garden city in the next few years, when all the vegetation matures," said a lecturer from a local university.

Putrajaya, together with the adjacent intelligent city Cyberjaya, will without doubt, position the MSC competitively in the international arena.

And for us who admire the pleasant green-domed Perdana Putra, deep

inside us, we will miss the person who has dedicated his time and energy to the development of the city.