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Hadi does an about-turn on NAM Summit

OPPOSITION leader Datuk Seri Hadi Awang gave the 13th Non-Aligned Movement Summit and the Peace Malaysia event in Bukit Jalil a thrashing in the Dewan Rakyat, describing the latter as more like a concert than a gathering to oppose war in Iraq.

Ironically, the Terengganu Menteri Besar had congratulated the Government and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on a well-organised and successful NAM a few days after the summit.

But in the House yesterday, the Marang MP was singing a different song. He began his tirade by demanding to know how much had been spent to renovate and refurbish the Putra World Trade Centre, the NAM Summit's venue.

He said that as the building belonged to Umno, the people had a right to know how much public funds had been used.

He also asked about other costs, for example whether payments for officials and volunteers, decorations and advertisements as well as transport and lodging for foreign delegates were borne by the Government.

He then turned his attention to the peace gathering, saying thousands who attended the rally were enticed with free gifts like T-shirts and entertainment by local and foreign artistes.