

10/06/2003

Putrajaya Convention Centre a trump card

PUTRAJAYA, Mon. - The Putrajaya Convention Centre should play a premier role in drawing international convention visitors to Malaysia, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said the promoters of the RM650 million PCC should invite convention planners and conveners to visit the centre.

"Especially since the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome has abated, Malaysia should concentrate on bringing more visitors into the country.

"The PCC and the beautiful buildings of Putrajaya have the potential to be a popular attraction for visitors."

Speaking at the ceremony where the PCC was handed over to the Government by Putrajaya Holdings Sdn Bhd, Dr Mahathir said PCC promoters should prepare beautiful brochures for distribution.

He said he was proud that work on the convention centre was completed within two years, which was ahead of schedule, adding that Malaysians were good at building things in record time.

He congratulated Putrajaya Holdings, IJM Construction Bhd, the architect Hijjas Kasturi Associates Sdn Bhd and KLCC Projekts Bhd, which was the project manager.

Dr Mahathir also said Malaysia's prosperity was due to the Government's brand of democracy that had produced level-headed people. "It is due to this kind of attitude that this splendid city of Putrajaya is now taking shape."

He earlier toured the magnificent PCC, which has a floor space of 135,000 sq metres. It is located on a 20.4ha site on top of a hill, 60m above sea level at Precinct 5 here.

In his speech, Putrajaya Holdings chairman Datuk Mohd Hashim Hassan said the PCC had been born of Dr Mahathir's vision for a convention centre designed to international standards to support events of a global standing and scale.

"Research has shown that convention centres are important in attracting visitors to a country and in boosting tourism revenue.

"In some major Asian capitals the building of convention centres had shown an immediate 76 per cent increase in staging of events."

Hashim said the centre's design was inspired by the wau bulan (moon kite) and the pending perak or silver royal belt buckle.

He said the Plenary Hall at the nine-level building could seat 3,000 people, while there is also a hall for heads of state seating 180 people.

The finishing touches are being put to the PCC to ensure it is fully ready to host its first global event, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference Summit, in October.