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Putrajaya Summit to focus on knowledge, morals

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KNOWLEDGE and morals will be the focus of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference's Putrajaya Summit in October to restore the dignity and unity of the Muslim world.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said Muslims would continue to be divided if they did not have the necessary knowledge.

"Knowledge and information will lead to development in Islamic countries, and also unity," he said on the sidelines of the three-day meeting at the Iranian International Broadcasting convention centre.

He said the Putrajaya Summit would be divided into two segments. The first would be an interactive session among foreign ministers to discuss issues affecting the dignity and unity of the ummah, a follow-up to the Teheran meet.

The leaders will then meet to affirm the stand to be taken by the organisation.

During this difficult times, he said, there was a need for Muslim countries to talk less and to concentrate on more action, a view shared by many foreign ministers who advocated that Malaysia play the leading role in revitalising the OIC. Malaysia will assume the chairmanship of the 57-member organisation in October.

He said many member countries held high hopes of Malaysia and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad providing an effective leadership.

He said many foreign ministers whom he met for bilateral talks had said that Malaysia was in the best position to lead the OIC.

"We talked about issues confronting the organisation, its future challenges and the Putrajaya Summit where everyone stated their confidence that it would be successful.

"Many also asked about Dr Mahathir, whom I think is one of the main reasons which has helped Malaysia to be better known among Muslim countries and in the world."

He said the ministers also wanted to know Malaysia's formula in transforming the country to what it was today.

"They are interested in learning how we are able to manage our economy well and have a strong foreign policy like standing firm on issues such as Iraq, Palestine and Iran despite pressure from the superpowers."