

INTERNATIONAL ARENA

Be they meetings of foreign leaders or groundbreaking world events, Putrajaya plays host to them all.

Since Putrajaya was opened to the public in 1999, it has become a national icon, an ambassador for the country's vision, growth and achievement. Foreign dignitaries treated to a tour of the administrative capital often had nothing but praise for the city. 'Compared to similar developments in the world's tropical countries, Putrajaya rises above them all,' said Indonesian Ambassador to Malaysia H Rusdihardjo, following Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's visit in February 2005.

But more significantly, Putrajaya has been the stage of several prestigious international events, especially with the opening of the Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC) in 2003.

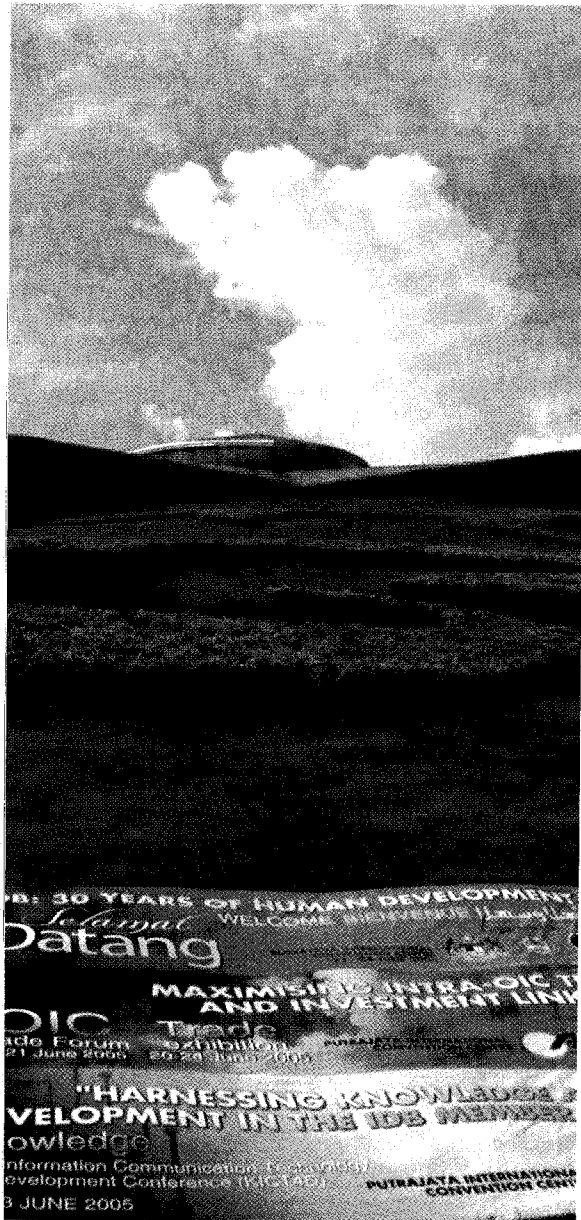
One of the most high-profile events was the 10th Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit, held in October that year. The summit, the first to be held in the Asia Pacific region, drew 33 Muslim leaders, the largest number since the inception of the 57-member OIC in 1969. The other members sent representatives for the event.

The landmark Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Ministerial Meeting on the Advancement of Women was held there, too, in May 2005. Attended by 84 member countries, the meeting concluded with the nine-point Putrajaya Declaration, which serves as a blueprint to address the challenges and grievances of women around the world.

More recently, the 30th annual meeting of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) was held from June 23 to 24 this year. This annual meeting of the board of governors of the IDB represents the largest Islamic gathering, with the participation of Ministers of Finance, Economy and Planning from 55 member countries and representatives of national financing institutions, Islamic banks and other similar regional and international institutions.

All these have, no doubt, helped to raise the profile of Putrajaya, and Malaysia as a whole, in the eyes of the world. Besides that, these events have helped to spur tourism activity in Putrajaya and the country as many delegates would extend their stay to relax and shop with their families ... the much-desired multiplier effect on the economy.

Thus, Putrajaya is not only positioning itself as a world-class administrative and commercial centre but is also keen on taping the hugely profitable and growing MICE (meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions) market.



PIX BY BERNAME

The recent 30th Islamic Development Bank Board of Governors Meeting was one of several international events held at the PICC.



