



This book, with fascinating stories and eye-catching images, details the development of Putrajaya, Malaysia's federal government administrative centre, from the time it was known as Prang Besar and its subsequent development to the present day. Twenty-five years have passed since the first foundation stone was laid, Putrajaya has today become Malaysia's national symbols of prosperity and splendour. A city from scratch, Putrajaya epitomises Malaysia's vision to create a new administrative centre that is capable of meeting the challenges of the new millennium as well as propel the country into an era where information technology plays a central role in national development. In fact, it would not be considered excessive to consider Putrajaya as one of the best achievements made by Malaysia since achieving Merdeka in 1957. This book is intended to give the general reader an overview of the history of Putrajaya, much of it difficult to obtain from a single source.

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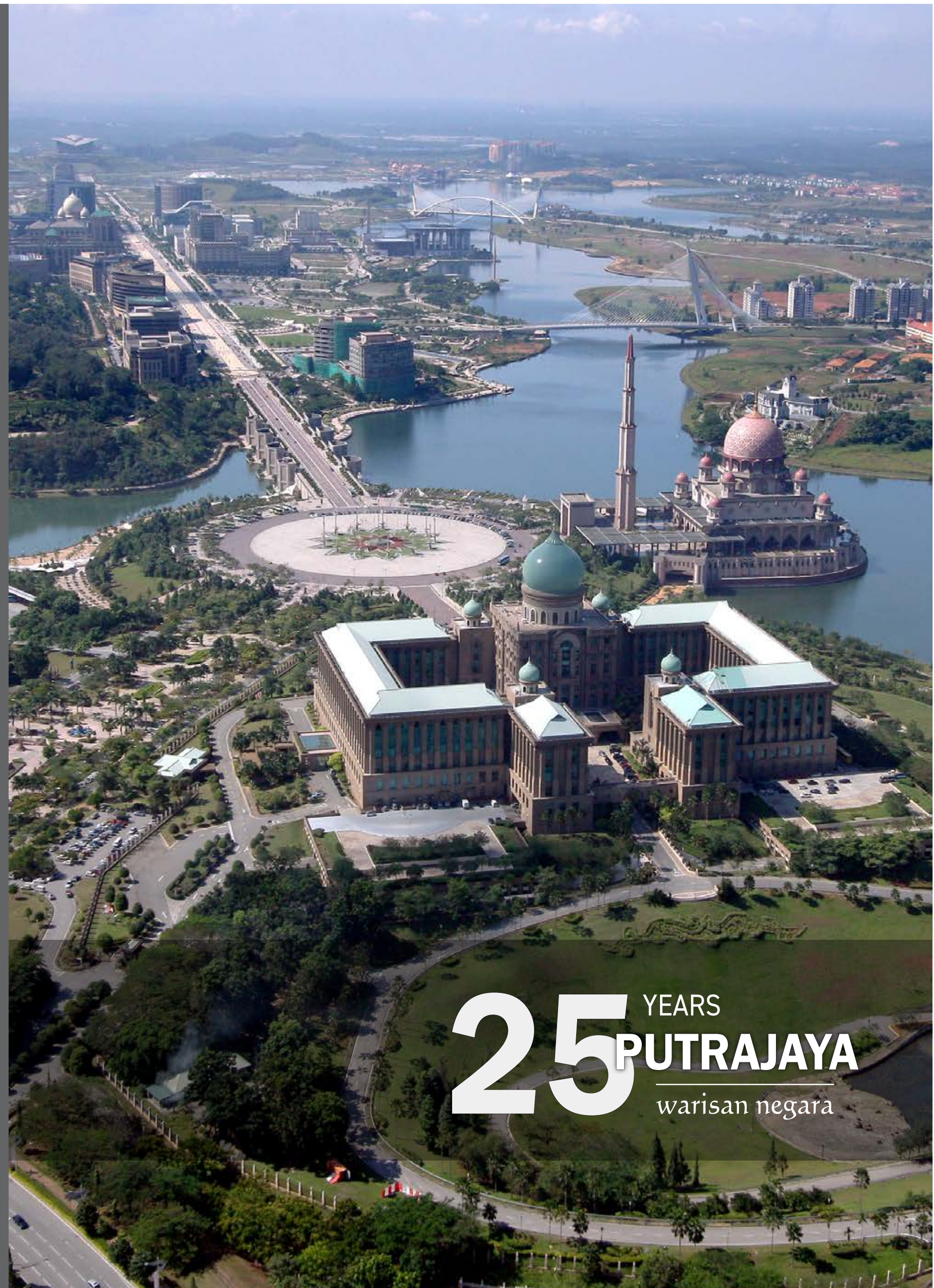


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PUTRAJAYA 25 YEARS

warisan negara







Putrajaya is a Warisan Negara. The aesthetic value of the many natural and man-made treasures in Putrajaya represents the diverse inherited traditions which are of great significance to the country. Their contribution as part of Malaysia's rich national heritage greatly captures the pulse of the sprawling modern city, a shining symbol of national pride for all Malaysians.

Putrajaya is a national gem with great importance. Purposefully developed to showcase the unique local identity, its establishment is not just for Malaysians today but also for future generations to come.

In order to achieve this loft aspiration, preservation and continuous conservation of the city's treasures are key factors that must be carefully undertaken by the administrators of Putrajaya. The stunning natural landscape which is enhanced by the breath-taking lake and wetlands complements the city's vivid architecture, turning the eye-catching structures into precious gems with unparalleled beauty.

Tell-tale signs that reveal characters of uniquely Malaysian heritage are evident throughout the city. Putrajaya's specially designed street layout as well as building facades and lamp posts highlighting local values and traditions continue to serve their purpose as subtle reminders to all that Malaysia is indeed a prosperous land where its people live in peace and harmony.

Di Atas Runtuhan Kota Melaka Kita Dirikan Putrajaya

Demikian gema gempita semangat merdeka
Kuasa sudah pada kita
Ayuh kita hiasi wajah bangsa
Dengan jurai-jurai kilauan permata
Kian jauh menyelusuri zaman merdeka
Kita jadi semakin mengerti
Semata-mata kuasa di tangan bukan pertanda bangsa berjaya
Kemiskinan, kedaifan, kejahilan dan timbunan peluang tersia-sia
Mandamparkan bangsa itu
Pada taman asing yang mereka pertuankan
Yang lain pula menjadi gelojoh
Oleh runtunan haloba segalanya mereka rempuh
Menganggap diri mereka panglima belantara
Pada musim kemarau nurani
Embun serta keringat merdeka tidak lagi sudi menitis
Melayu tidak belajar dari sejarah 450 tahun terjajah
Mewarnakan sejarah mereka
Dengan dendang dan hiburan hati bangga
Tentang ceritera dongeng yang mereka cipta
Yang remeh itu utama
Yang utama itu remeh
Yang kecil itu di alamkan
Yang alam itu dihamakan
Melodi ceritera yang sungguh mengasyikkan
Kata mereka; takkan Melayu hilang di dunia
Sambil menggigit jari jemari
Mereka pun menjadi kuli di negaranya sendiri
Lama sudah runtuhnya Kota Melaka
Kita tidak kembalikan kota itu dengan papan di Jawa
Pun tidak kita bina tugu ingatan
Di Prang Besar kita tiada selera berperang
Dengan tangan-tangan halus arkitek anak watan

Dengan iringan doa dari rekahan bibir
Petani di bendang
Nelayan di lautan
Di sini kita bina mercu tanda bangsa
Suatu generasi megacity
Suatu jaringan menjangkau seluruh jagat
Suatu taman himpunan segala bau-bauan jutaan flora
Suatu simbosis insan dan alam
Kita namakan sempena nama bapa putranegara
Putrajaya, lambang negara bangsa merdeka
Di mercu ini kita zahirkan seribudaya bangsa
Dengan segala kelazatan muzik alam
Serta hidangan dan hamparan seni taman

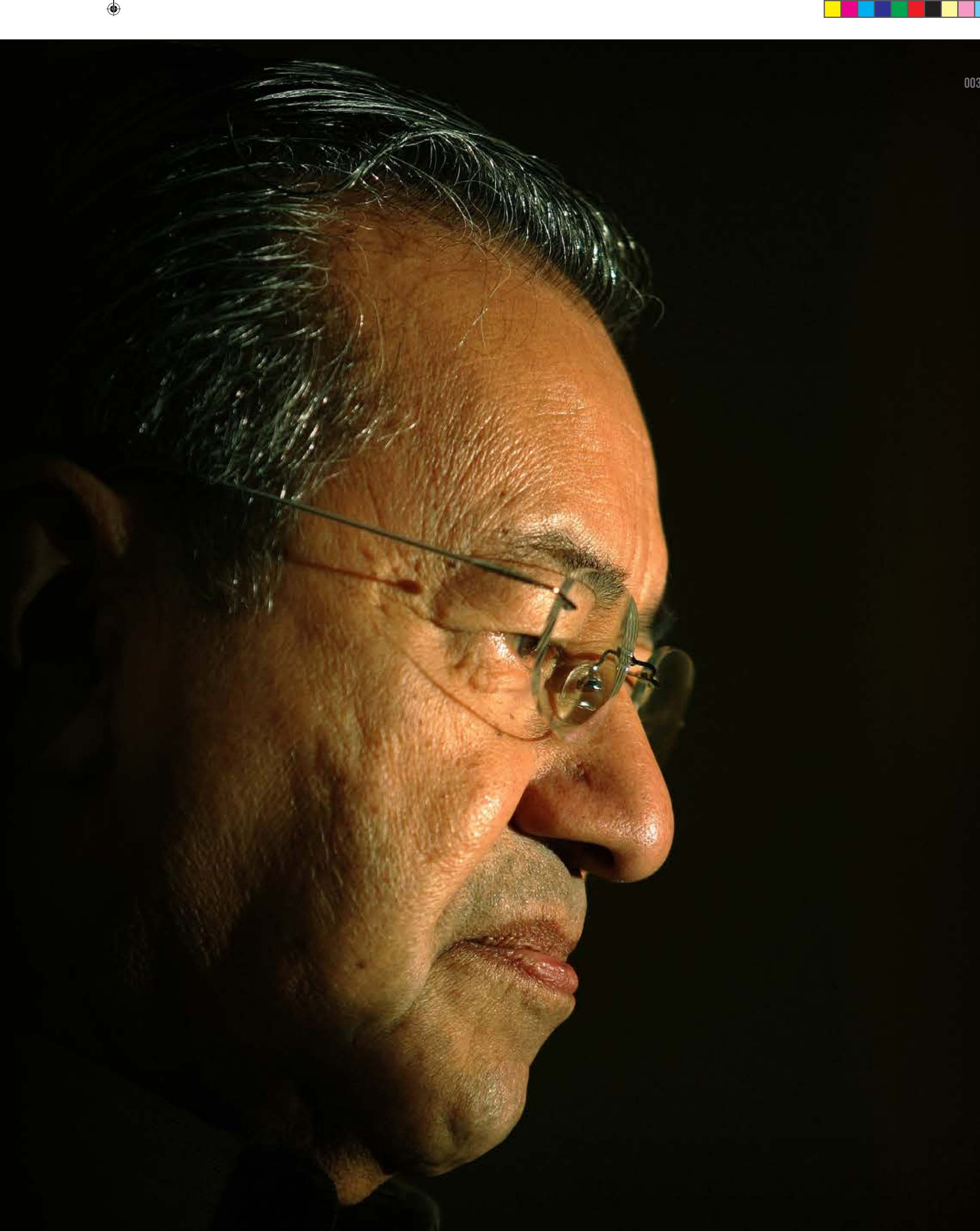
Bersih - indah - tertib - teratur
Adunan tamadun tinggi
Jumlah segala cita cita dan harapan
Membongkar segala-gala yang telah hilang
Dan kita tidak payah mengambil nyawa sendiri
Untuk menebus maruah itu

Dari sini kita menyusun langkah dengan yakin
Membina bangsa dengan cara kita
Bangga dengan apa yang ada
Menghadapi cabaran dengan segala ketahanan
Cukup tangkas menangkis dari menjadi korban kali ke-dua

Putrajaya, lambang negara bangsa merdeka
Putrajaya, lambang negara bangsa merdeka
Putrajaya, lambang negara bangsa merdeka

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, 29 August 2001,
Patriotic Poetry Festival 2001, Taman Putra Perdana, Putrajaya.

Photo : Tun Dr Mahathir, Putrajaya, June, 2005.





The Essence of the Poem

This poem was written by Tun Dr Mahathir and read in person during a patriotic poetry festival on August 29, 2002. The poem clearly shows the importance of Putrajaya as it is compared to the grandeur of Melaka which was once home to one of the most famous and powerful empires in the world.

The comparison between these two important cities is considered fair given that they both share many similarities even though they were separated by time. At the top of the long list is the pertinent function of both cities as national symbols of prosperity and splendour. In fact, it would not be considered excessive to consider Putrajaya as one of the best achievements made by our nation since achieving Merdeka in 1957.

Like Washington DC in the United States, the name Putrajaya itself was inspired by a great Malaysian statesman who is none other than the Father of Independence and the first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj.

When making comparisons, however, many people consider Putrajaya to be well ahead of the American capital in a variety of aspects, especially those related to refinement, emblem of spirit and elements of art and culture.

Through that particular poem, Tun Dr Mahathir expressed his heartfelt hope for Putrajaya to one day give rise to a technologically advanced generation that is not only progressive in thought but also has the compassion to live in harmony with God's other creations that exist in all their splendour in the city's many lush gardens.

Putrajaya's success, the Prime Minister said, will forever remain in the hopes and prayers of Malaysians from all walks of life, from farmers and fishermen right up to the generation that now calls the dream megacity home.



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01. From Crops to City



Workers housing in Prang Besar, May 1994.

Realizing A Dream

Could anyone, just a few decades ago, have guessed that this once far flung place which was originally covered with rubber and oil palm estates could transform so seamlessly and magnificently into an intelligent garden city named Putrajaya?

This is especially so when it boasts of well thought through development, state-of-the-art infrastructure, magnificent buildings and a landscape covered with a string of scenic man-made lakes. As such, the new Federal Government Administrative Centre, since inception, has never failed to capture the imagination of those who have set eyes on it.

The existence of Putrajaya at a place which was originally known as Prang Besar can be traced all the way back to the mid-

1980s when Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had the great foresight to realise the need for a new Federal Government Administrative Centre outside Kuala Lumpur. While sharing his vision, Tun Dr Mahathir pictured Putrajaya as a city that would characterize the Malaysian spirit in its fullest sense and symbolize the nation's aspirations for the 21st century.

Today, the dream has not only become a reality but has also dramatically transformed into a self-sufficient city which not only serves as the beating heart of the Federal Government but also as a much desired residential area and a must go-to destination for tourists eager to savour its world-class architecture as well as eye-catching landscape.



Rubber tapper Selvi Ramalingam, 22, in Prang Besar Estate, February 1990.



A visit by Rubber Trade Mission sent by the Rubber Growers Association and Rubber Trade Association London to Prang Besar Estate, 1960s.



Looking Back

Taking a look at history, Prang Besar Estate, which literally means Great War, was some piece of land which later was converted to become a rubber plantation given to British veterans of World War I in recognition of their gallant service and contribution to the British Empire. If taken from a different view point, it was indeed a monumental task or a big war in itself fought by the Putrajaya planners during their attempt to transform the verdant rural landscape into a modern sustainable city.

Prang Besar has become a distant memory today but in its place is indeed a befitting successor. Tun Dr Mahathir once wrote: "Putrajaya is a living testimony of how Malaysians have progressed from being builders of houses and townships to full-fledged world class cities." The words of our two-time Prime Minister indeed ring true. Putrajaya is the realisation of the Malaysian dream. It encompasses all the desirable values that we hold dear and will continue to make Malaysians proud for many generations to come.



Mini buses at
Jalan Chow Kit,
September 1993.



Standing in line for buses at Pudu Raya, August 1985.

Necessity of a New Administrative Capital

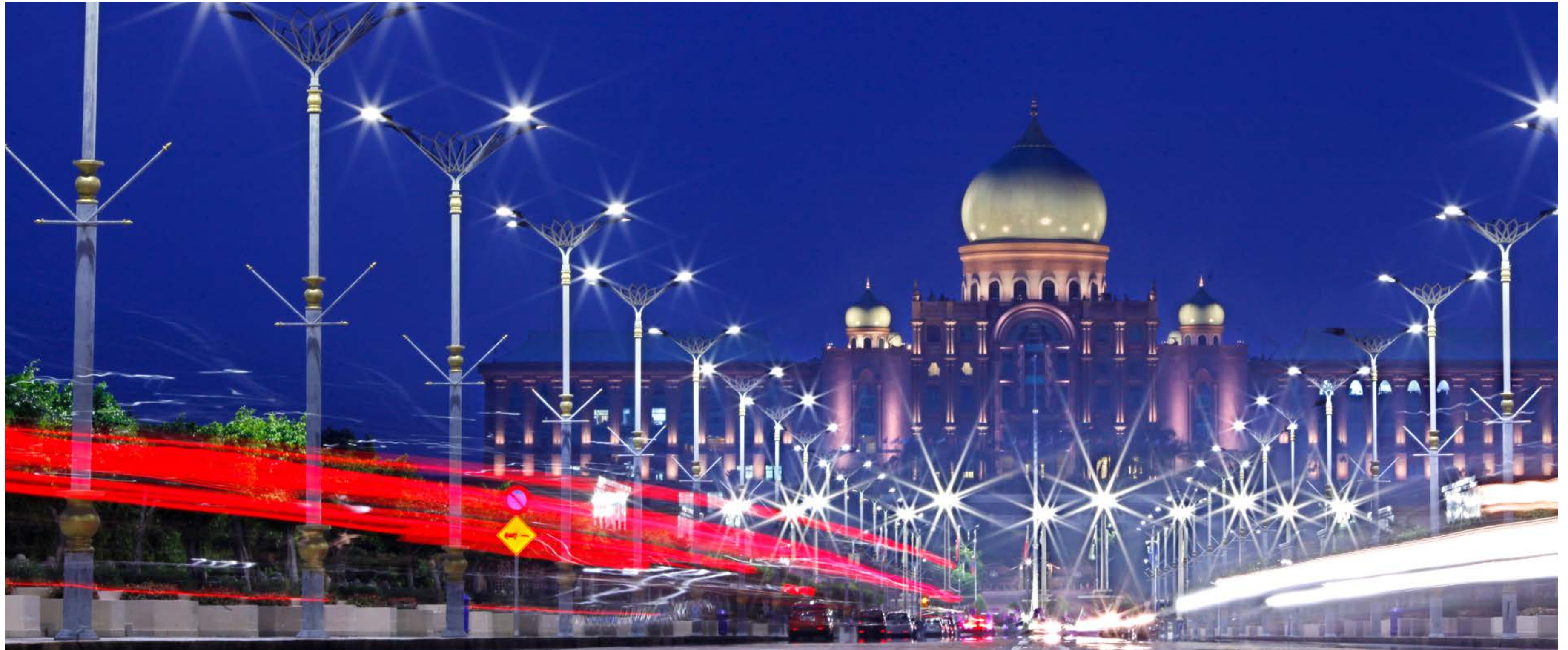
Events signalling the need for the establishment of a new Federal Government Administrative Centre began to surface almost three decades ago. Under the leadership of Tun Dr Mahathir who was then the fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia, the country was experiencing rapid economic growth with its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) averaging more than eight percent annually.

This period of phenomenal expansion coincided with a significant shift from an agriculture-based economy to one that emphasises on manufacturing and industry. Together with the launch of Vision 2020 and numerous mega-projects around the country, Malaysia was poised to become a fully industrialised country with a quadrupled per capita income twenty years into the 21st century as envisioned by Tun Dr Mahathir at that time. As a result, there was a pressing need to change the way things were done in order to sustain this rapid economic growth and ensure the success of Vision 2020. At the top of the list was the urgent necessity to improve efficiency in the way Malaysia was administered. In other words, the various ministries and government departments, seen as the primary agents and drivers of growth and development in the country, were required to upgrade their services and remain nimble when reacting to changing situations.

At the same time, there was a general consensus that it was not going to be easy to achieve these required changes if the Federal Government chose to remain in Kuala Lumpur which was showing signs of pressure as a result of decades of rapid economic growth. Apart from suffering from an ageing

infrastructure, Kuala Lumpur was experiencing major problems like loss of productivity, valuable time and precious resources due to persistent traffic gridlocks, a shrinking land bank for future industrial and residential developments as well as an overburdened public services sector which was already reaching the upper end of its limit. These problems have resulted in a severe diseconomy where many negative impacts like reduced efficiency and a marked decline in living standards have become so common that many in Kuala Lumpur have begun to accept them as norms. Another major problem plaguing the people living in the nation's capital and its fringes was the high population density which led to the lack of open spaces and parks for members of the public to interact and indulge in recreational and cultural activities.

At the same time, the Federal Government was also aware that available state land for development in Kuala Lumpur was becoming a scarce commodity and those available were deemed unsuitable as they were too fragmented. The idea of acquiring large tracts of land from private hands was dismissed as quickly as it was proposed because it, together with the high construction and infrastructure costs in the nation's capital, would prove to be far too expensive to be viable. All these factors reinforced the line of thought that Kuala Lumpur could no longer cater efficiently to the requirements of government administrative services as Malaysia marched into the future and serious thought had to be given to identify a more suitable site for a new federal administrative centre.



Pic of JPN counter service / piagam pelanggan.

The idea of having a designated federal administrative centre is not an entirely new concept if developments in other countries are taken into consideration. The world has known for a long time the effective roles played by administrative centres such as Canberra in Australia, Washington DC in the United States and Brasilia in Brazil. The latest member to join this exclusive list is Sejong in South Korea. Back in the late 1980s, many believed that Malaysia had much to gain from the establishment of a new federal administrative centre that was located outside Kuala Lumpur. The new site, with its ample land area acting like a blank canvas, would give planners the rare opportunity to come up with a well-structured city that would be equipped with all the necessary modern amenities and facilities to create a conducive living and working environment for all who worked and lived in it. This new administrative centre would also help the government to disperse development activities that had so far concentrated primarily on Kuala Lumpur, spreading it out to the rest of the Klang Valley and even further.

New Growth Triangle : Putrajaya, KLIA & Cyberjaya

The establishment of the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) and Cyberjaya in Sepang, Selangor at around the same time also went a long way in helping to reduce development pressures on Kuala Lumpur. Close to these two new areas is the site earmarked for the new Federal Government Administrative Centre. Back then, Putrajaya was still known as Prang Besar but the huge development potential of the area was already obvious to those who cared to look closely. The development of KLIA and its related infrastructure created a new and dynamic growth area that boosted the potential development of Putrajaya and its surrounding areas. Putrajaya's success also brought fresh waves of economic growth and progress to once quiet rural hamlets and turned them into bustling places that attracted investors like magnets. Among the major beneficiaries of this spill over effect were Sepang and Kuala Langat in Selangor, Nilai in Negeri Sembilan and even parts of northern Melaka like Alor Gajah.





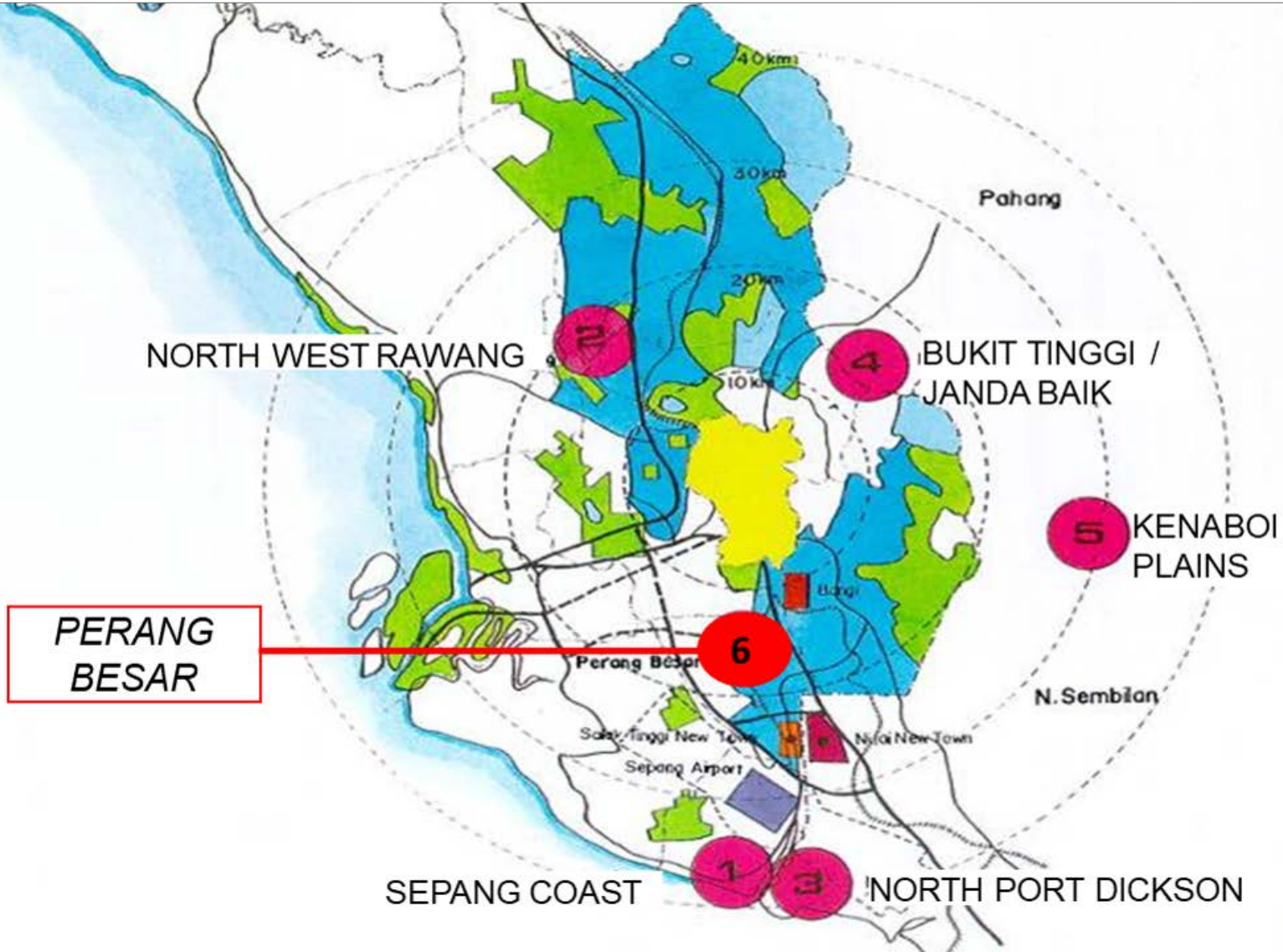
Perfect Synergy

At the same time, Putrajaya's close proximity to Kuala Lumpur not only helped to make sure that the latter maintained its position as Malaysia's capital but also made certain that communications and transactions between these two key cities went on seamlessly without hindrance. Right from the beginning, the decision to establish Putrajaya and shift the entire Federal Government Administrative Centre was never seen as a threat to Kuala Lumpur or reduced the capital's standing in the eyes of the world.

Kuala Lumpur's position as Malaysia's most important city is unassailable. It is the country's financial hub and beating heart of Malaysia's vibrant commercial activities. Furthermore, it is home to key institutions in the country like the Istana Negara, the official residence of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, the Malaysian Parliament as well as countless foreign embassies. In short, the twin cities of Putrajaya and Kuala Lumpur complement each other perfectly. Together, they have become engines of growth and development, confidently propelling the nation and its people into the 21st century and beyond.



02. The Initial Stage



Site Selection

One of the first few important tasks involved in the development of a new city is to embark on a detailed study and subsequently come to a decision on the most suitable site available. With reference to the development of Putrajaya, this was conducted by a group of expert consultants appointed by the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) from the Prime Minister's Department in early 1992. A total of six potential locations at Rawang (Selangor), North Port Dickson (Negeri Sembilan), Janda Baik / Bukit Tinggi (Pahang), Kenaboi (Negeri Sembilan), Sepang Coast (Selangor) and Prang Besar (Selangor) were surveyed in detail and given due consideration.

After deliberating on the proposal presented by the consultants, the Cabinet Ministers made their unanimous decision on June 2, 1993 to build the new Federal Government Administrative Centre at Prang Besar. The decision made was largely influenced by the commonly heard real estate mantra: Location, location, location. Prang Besar was strategically situated within the bustling Klang Valley Growth Corridor and just 20 kilometres away from the state-of-the-art Kuala Lumpur International Airport. More importantly, the site was a mere 25 kilometres away from Malaysia's capital which was at that time poised to become home to the world's tallest building with the planned construction of the iconic Petronas Twin Towers at the Kuala Lumpur City Centre.

- The selection of Prang Besar was based on the following factors :
- Cost of infrastructure construction and land acquisition.
 - Strategic location within a growth corridor.
 - Easy accessibility to major transportation network (rail, highways, and ports).
 - Ecistence of intrtesting natural vegetation and land form to be incorporated into city planning and development.
 - Maximizing potential impact for catalyzing development to the surrounding regions.
 - Minimal disruption to local community.

Those mega projects, together with the planned development of Cyberjaya, meant that the new Federal Government Administrative Centre was perfectly positioned to tap into the high-tech wired anchors of the Multimedia Super Corridor, Malaysia's information superhighway. Furthermore, the chosen site was highly accessible given its close proximity to the country's main transportation network which consisted of highways, airports, railways and major ports. When making its final decision, the government was encouraged by the fact that various factors like the local topography and the existing flora and fauna were compatible with the planned development which was exactly like what was envisaged by Tun Dr Mahathir. The deciding aspect that won the vote for Prang Besar was the relatively low land acquisition, construction and infrastructure development costs compared to the other five shortlisted sites.



Prime Minister Tun Mahathir Mohamad meets Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah regarding the taking over a land for development of Putrajaya, at Istana Bukit Kayangan, Shah Alam, 14 July 1995.



Pic of declaration of Putrajaya as the third Wilayah Persekutuan.

Land Matters

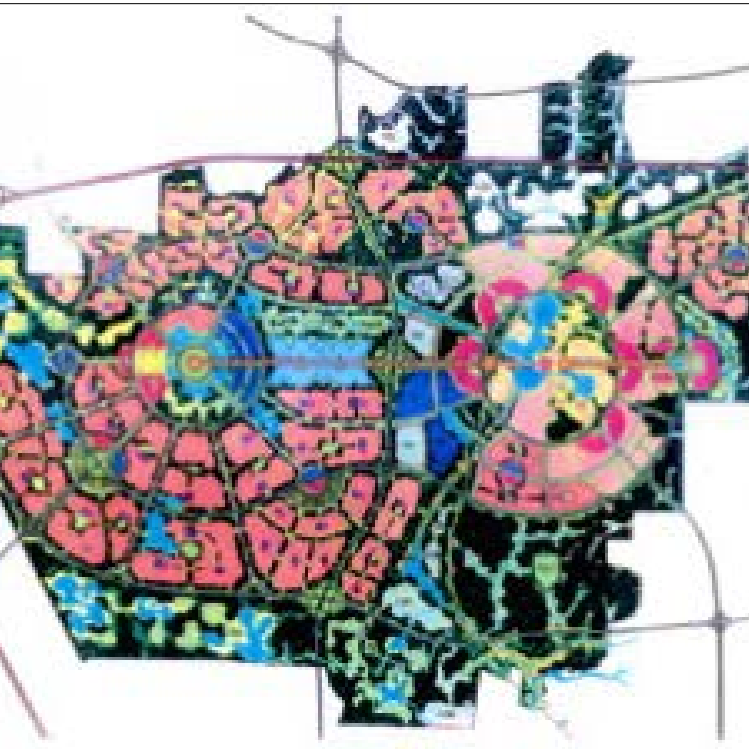
Once everything was finalised, a reserve area the size of 11,978 hectares was gazetted under Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act 1960 on June 17, 1993. Six months later on December 16, 1993, a 4,136 hectare piece of land earmarked for development was gazetted under Section 8 of the same Act.

With the declaration of Putrajaya as a new district, the Selangor State Government also handed over various powers to the Putrajaya Land Administrator as stipulated in Section 13 National Land Code in the Selangor State Government Gazette PU. 10 effective from March 28, 1997 to help improve efficiency. Although Putrajaya district remained in Selangor and land matters still fell under the jurisdiction of the state but the task of land administration was handed over to Perbadanan Putrajaya. This was in line with Article II Clause (3) of the Putrajaya Establishment Agreement. According to the Third Schedule of the agreement, the few matters concerning land that still remained under the purview of the Selangor State Government included the collection and deposits of land tax at the rate that would be determined by both parties involved. All matters related to the Putrajaya land administration was managed by the Land Administration Section which was under the Perbadanan Putrajaya's Department of City Planning. It was headed by a Deputy Director who was also appointed as the Putrajaya Land Administrator by Selangor state authority according to Section 12 National Land Code.

In its early years, Putrajaya, which became a Federal Territory on February 1, 2001, was placed under the supervision of the Federal Territory and Klang Valley Planning and Development Division of the Prime Minister's Department. However, following a cabinet reshuffle by the then Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on March 27, 2004, the division was upgraded to a full-fledged ministry. Putrajaya and the other two federal territories Kuala Lumpur and Labuan were placed under this ministry whose functions include to ensure the implementation of the government's policies are done vigorously and effectively, to formulate policies, determine directions and priorities in the development and administration of the three federal territories.

Berikutan perisytiharan Putrajaya sebagai Wilayah Persekutuan pada 1 Februari 2001, Putrajaya tidak lagi menjadi sebahagian daripada Negeri Selangor. Pada 24 Ogos 2001, Pejabat Tanah Wilayah Persekutuan Putrajaya telah di tubuhkan dibawah Jabatan Perdana Menteri. Sehubungan itu Pejabat Tanah Putrajaya tidak lagi beroperasi di bawah Perbadanan Putrajaya.

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Concept Development Stage

Moving on to the next phase, three committees were set up to oversee the development of the mammoth project namely the Putrajaya Development Main Committee, chaired by Chief Secretary to the Government at the time Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid and Putrajaya Development Technical Committee and Landscape Development Committee, both chaired by Director-General of Town and Country Planning Department (JPBD) then, Datuk Zainuddin Muhammad.

JPBD was instructed to select a local team of planners and engineers who had the capabilities to develop and build the proposed administrative centre. In order to ensure the success of the project, those chosen were the best in their field of expertise. On 4 December, 1993 a total of six local consulting firms, Akitek Jururancang (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd, BEP Akitek Sdn Bhd, Hijjas Kasturi Associates Sdn, Minconsult Sdn Bhd, Perunding Alam Bina Sdn Bhd and Rekarancang Sdn Bhd were appointed to prepare the development concept. These companies were assisted by the two government departments, JPBD and the Public Works Department (JKR). All these six consulting companies were then merged into a consortium named Konsortium Kota Bistari Sdn Bhd. In January 1994, a report entitled “Technical Proposal: Proposed Masterplan for the Development of the New Administrative City at Prang Besar” was submitted to the Economic Planning Unit. The Cabinet on February 15, 1994 approved the master plan based on the garden city concept. Another history was recorded on October 12, 1994 when the cabinet unanimously agreed to change the name of Prang Besar to Putrajaya in honour of Malaysia’s first prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, for his invaluable contributions to the nation.

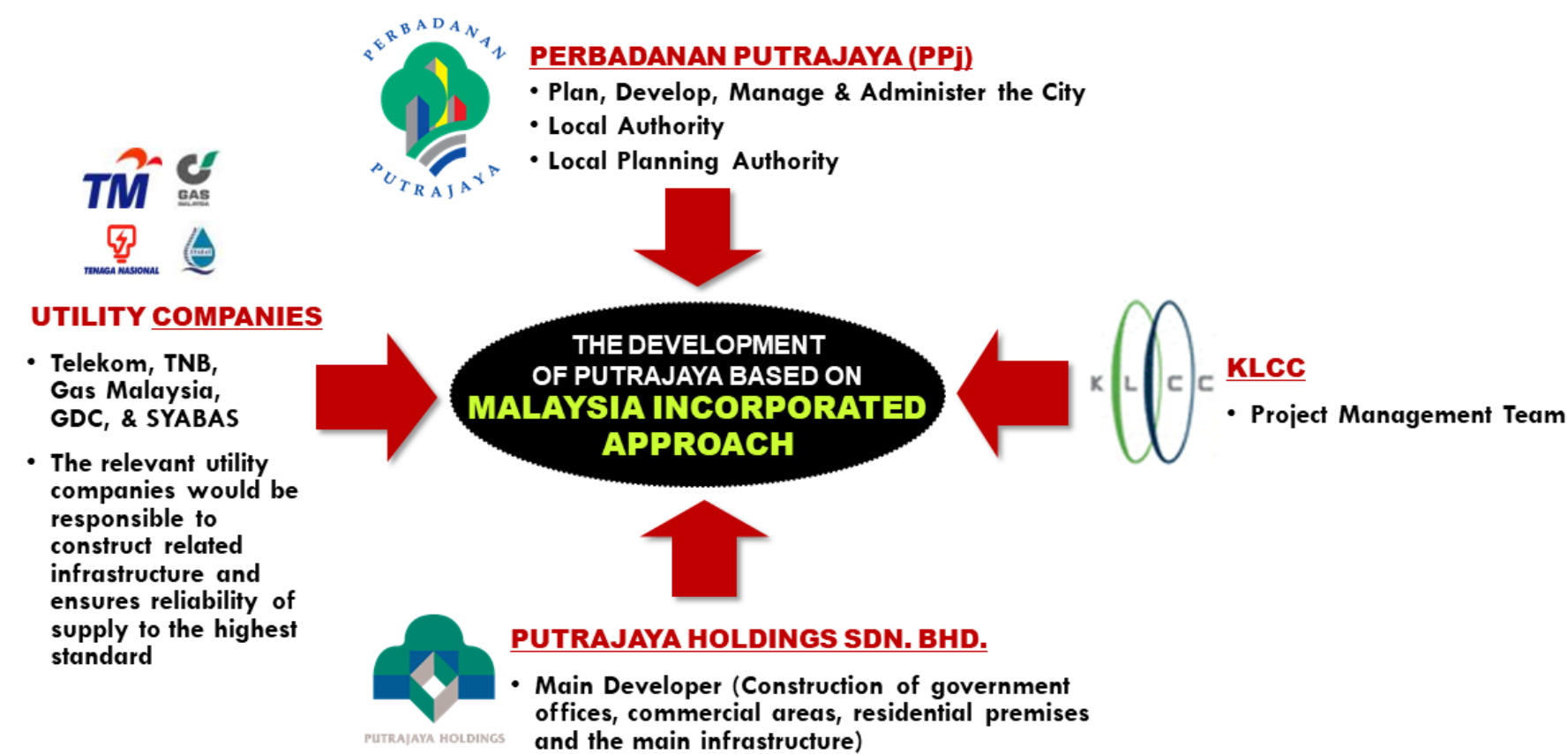


Carta Organisasi Jawatankuasa Penyelarasan Pembangunan Putrajaya (peringkat awal)
(Info fr Datuk Hai. Chart to be done by Zainal)

Initial Coordination Tasks

On January 1, 1995, the Putrajaya Planning and Implementation Unit (UPPPj), which fell under the purview of the Prime Minister's Department, was established under the Establishment Warrant Bill 32/95. The UPPPj then took over the role as secretariat of the Federal Government Administrative Centre Coordination Committee from the Economic Planning Unit. Seen as a temporary entity until the establishment of Perbadanan Putrajaya three months later, the UPPPj was given the responsibility to draft the basic framework and development strategy, coordinate planning activities and commence the construction of Putrajaya. During those early stages, the UPPPj staff operated from the Federal House, located at Jalan Sultan Hishamuddin in Kuala Lumpur.

PARTIES INVOLVED IN PUTRAJAYA DEVELOPMENT



Malaysia Incorporated Concept in Putrajaya Development

Putrajaya was developed using a concept known as Malaysia Incorporated where the government, through the newly set up Perbadanan Putrajaya, sat in the navigator's seat in guiding the project while the task to construct the administrative capital was given to a private company called Putrajaya Holdings. This unique cooperation between the public and private sector contributed to higher levels of efficiency and improvement besides freeing the government from financial and cost concerns.



Perbadanan Putrajaya headquarters

Perbadanan Putrajaya

Perbadanan Putrajaya came into existence on March 1, 1996, after the Perbadanan Putrajaya Act 1995 (Act 536) was passed. It was given wide ranging powers to act as the local authority, local planning authority, regulatory authority and land administrator as well as closely monitor and coordinate the Putrajaya development project. Initially, a total of 32 posts were approved by the Public Service Department and the Malaysian Treasury through the Statutory Body Approval Bill No. 3 on October 5, 1995. Out of this, 13 were seconded from various departments from the UPPPj while an officer was seconded from the Attorney General's Chambers to act as Corporation Secretary from March 1996 onwards. Apart from continuing the work that had already been approved by the Main Committee and the UPPPj prior to its establishment, Perbadanan Putrajaya took on its primary administrative role by initiating further development strategies. The plans were not set in stone and were constantly reviewed and revised to meet the principal demand of the day. Nevertheless, the common goal remained the same: to lay the foundation for an attractive and modern city that is filled with unique and distinctive Malaysian characters.

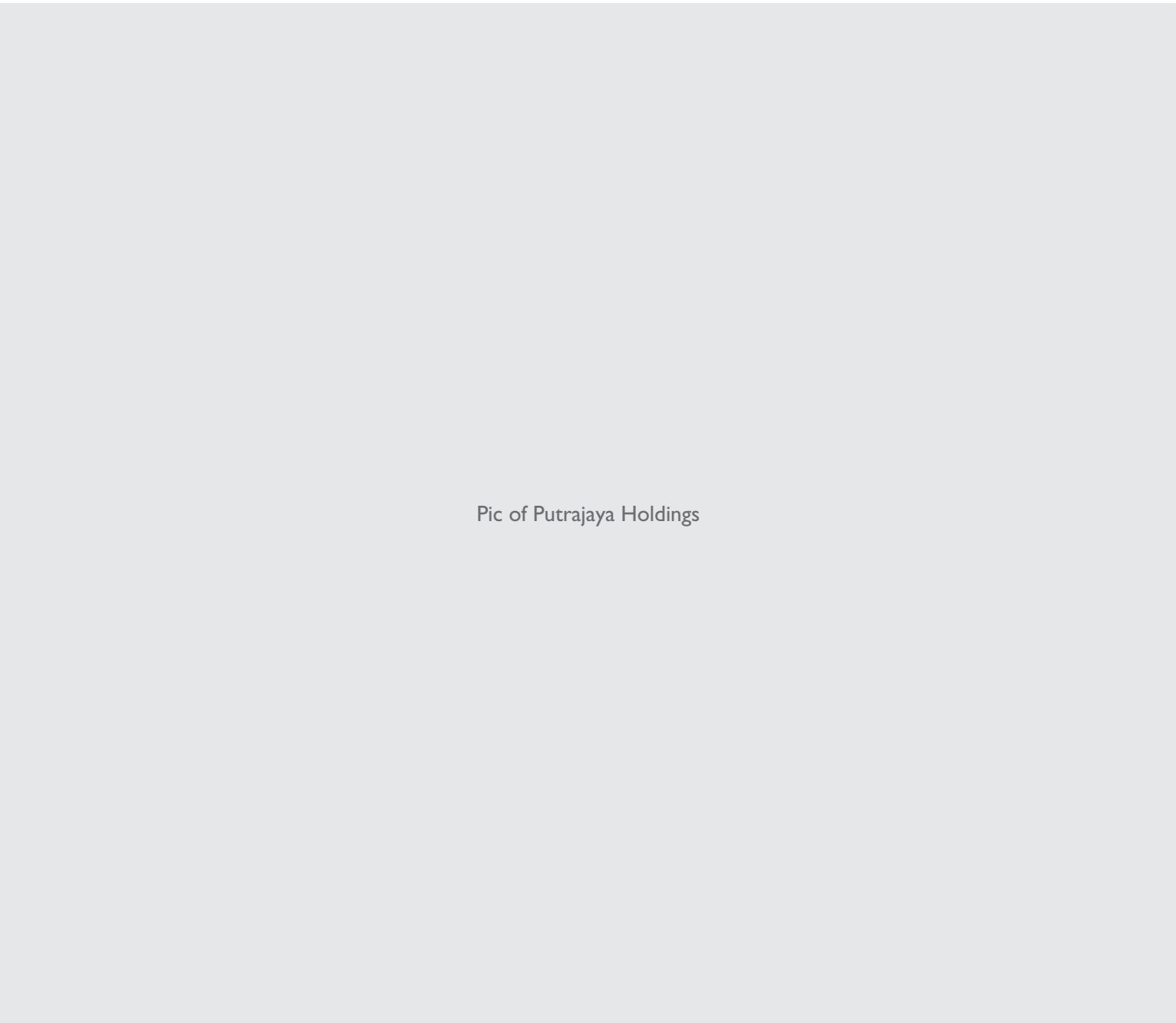
The Federal Government Administrative Centre of Putrajaya Establishment Agreement was signed between the Federal Government and the Selangor State Government on July 20, 1995. This agreement, made under the Federal Constitution Article 80(5), gave the Federal Government the absolute right to administer and manage Putrajaya, including land matters as stipulated in Article III Clause (3) of the Putrajaya Establishment Agreement. On August 3, 1995 the Government Gazette broadcasting the 4,390 hectare Prang Besar Development Plan was approved by the Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di Pertuan Agong. For land administration purposes, the site was gazetted

according to the requirements of Section 11 of the National Land Code on June 20, 1996. Putrajaya effectively became a new district that was separate from Sepang when Government Gazette WKNSel P.U. 26 was enforced some three months earlier on March 1, 1996.

Perbadanan Putrajaya was also involved in managing the social impact on the local residents who were affected by land acquisitions of the Prang Besar, Sedgely, Galloway and Madingley estates. With the assistance from the Selangor State Secretary's Office, the Sepang District and Land Office and the Sepang Municipal Council, a resettlement program was put in place where those affected were given resettlement allowances and relocated to new housing estates that came complete with kindergarten and a plot for a temple. At the same time, former settlers and affected land owners were fully compensated.

Setelah kawasan Putrajaya diistiharkan sebagai Wilayah Persekutuan, Akta Perbadanan Putrajaya 1985 (Akta 536) telah dipinda pada 3 Okt 2002 melalui Akta Perbadanan Putrajaya (Pindaan) 2002 (Akta A1168). Antara pindaan perkataan "Kawasan Perbadanan Putrajaya" diganti dengan Wilayah Persekutuan Putrajaya" dan juga mengenai Aggota Perbadanan Putrajaya ".

Berikutan pembentukan Kabinet pada 27 Mac, Kementerian Wilayah Persekutuan telah ditubuhkan bagi mengambil alih fungsi-fungsi Bahagian Pembangunan Wilayah Persekutuan, Jabatan Perdana menteri dengan fungsi-fungsi utamanya utk memajukan dan mengawal selia ketiga-tiga Wilayah Persekutuan. Berikutan itu juga Perbadanan Putrajaya bersama-sama Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur dan Perbadanan Labuan diletakkan di bawah Kementerian Wilayah Persekutuan .



Pic of Putrajaya Holdings

Formation of Putrajaya Holdings

Upon completion of matters concerning the master plan and land acquisition, focus shifted to the main developer, Putrajaya Holdings Sdn Bhd, which was established on October 19, 1995. With an authorised capital of RM3 million, its shareholders comprised of Petroliam Nasional Berhad, Khazanah Nasional Berhad and Kumpulan Wang Amanah Negara which had a respective shared equity holdings at the ratio of 40:40:20. Putrajaya Holdings became the first privatised entity specially created to undertake a massive real estate development project. As a private company it could turn to the capital and financial markets to raise funds and also no longer bound by the chains of government bureaucratic machinery, allowing quicker decision making. It was hands off for the Economic Planning Unit then on as the development of Putrajaya was considered a private project.

The total area of Putrajaya is 4,390 hectares of which 156 separate titles/lots have been registered and issued. Of these, 34 titles/lots were for commercial or business use, 56 for residential use and 66 for government use.

On September 18, 1996 Putrajaya Holdings was instructed to commence construction without having to wait for the signing of the concession agreement. The task that awaits now was to build a brand new 21st century city on a scale and at a speed that has never ever been undertaken in the history of the nation. The time frame: 15 years with six years allocated for Phase 1 and the remaining period to Phase 2. Phase 1 alone required the completion of government buildings, residential units, retail outlets, parks and gardens, schools, hospitals and other facilities and amenities found in a modern city.

Utility Providers

Telekom		TNB	
Gas District Cooling	Gas Malaysia Berhad		Syabas

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Formation of KLCC Projek Berhad



KLCC Projek Berhad assumed the role of Project Manager after an agreement was signed with Perbadanan Putrajaya on August 17, 1999. It was tasked to ensure that all the projects were carried out on time and according to specifications as well as supervise the team of appointed consultants which included architects, engineers and landscape architects.



03. Vision



The 1st President of Putrajaya Corporation Tun Azizan Zainul Abidin (L) and Tun Dr Mahathir during the opening of Putrajaya Shangri-La Putrajaya, February 2003.

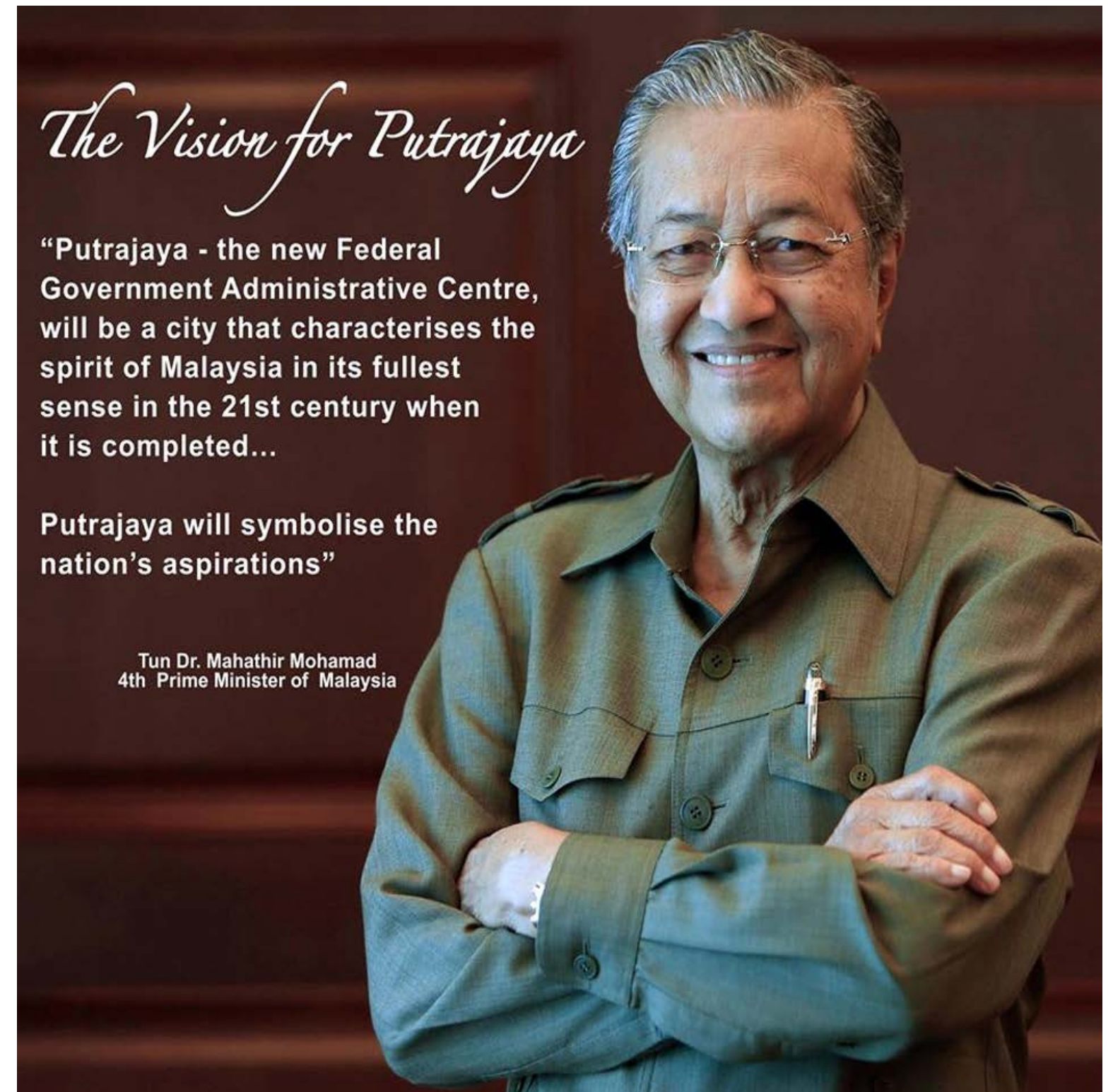


Mapping Out the Vision

Putrajaya started out in 1995 with vision to prove to all Malaysians as well as the international community that Malaysia is a stable, prosperous and progressive nation and at the same time, highlight the nation's deeply rooted cultural and religious values. The new city epitomises Malaysia's vision to create a new government administrative centre that is capable of meeting the challenges of the new millennium as well as propel the country into an era where information technology plays a central role in national development.

While elaborating on the vision, the first Perbadanan Putrajaya president, Tun Azizan Zainul Abidin, the very person who is considered by Tun Dr Mahathir as the prime mover in Putrajaya's development, reiterated: "The city will not only provide an

environment that is conducive to quality urban living but also cater to the various pursuits of economic benefit." At the same time, Tun Dr Mahathir, during his speech at the event launch of Putrajaya - the New City on October 8, 1997, said: "The development of Putrajaya aims to bring together a symbiosis of man, nature and science through meticulous planning and in-depth urban design." The Prime Minister's view is accurate in every sense of the word as history has proven that most cities in the world have out grown themselves so rapidly that humans and nature could no longer coexist in harmony and balance. More often than not, when that happens, development takes centre stage and is given top priority while the rest are either side-lined or sacrificed for the sake of progress.





Realising the Vision

Right from the beginning, the vision for Putrajaya as well-planned new city is for it to achieve a harmonious coexistence between man, nature and technology through the implementation of the most compatible strategies in urban planning, natural landscape and eco-cultural preservation. It is beyond any doubt that Tun Azizan and Tun Dr Mahathir both shared the vision for Putrajaya to be a city that blends seamlessly with the environment. With the presence of nature as close and intimate as a quick walk to any of the city's strategically located gardens, Putrajaya is well-equipped for the present as well as the future and is well on its way to join the ranks as one of the world's most well-planned and well-managed cities.

As history has proven itself repeatedly, Tun Dr Mahathir is not the type of person who is easily satisfied by just standing at the side-lines and watching the development of his pet projects from afar. In the case of Putrajaya, a project which is very close to his heart, the Prime Minister's active involvement served as a constant reminder to everyone present that he is the prime catalyst behind the development of the city within a park. Tun Dr Mahathir does not need special meetings or representatives to put forward his ideas of how Putrajaya's image should be projected as it is often done by himself. In a classic case in point, the Prime Minister once took hold of a piece of paper during a meeting and began sketching, from memory, a design that he wanted for the Putrajaya Boulevard before revealing to everyone present the original location of the building or monument that had been his source of inspiration while travelling the world.

Acting on Tun Dr Mahathir's lead, the team of designers and planners would visit the various locations mentioned to acquire further details on the designs. As a result, many architectural focal points and key government structures in Putrajaya have been designed based on various well-known classical Middle Eastern architectural styles from a variety of origins including Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Northern India, Central Asia, France, Moorish civilization from Spain, Ottoman empire from Turkey as well as artistic modern building designs that have just taken the world by storm. Guided by Tun Dr Mahathir's exemplary commitment, everyone involved in the development of Putrajaya made it their mission to adhere closely to his vision of creating a city in a garden that is not only stunning, vibrant and modern but also has the rare ability of touching the human soul, something

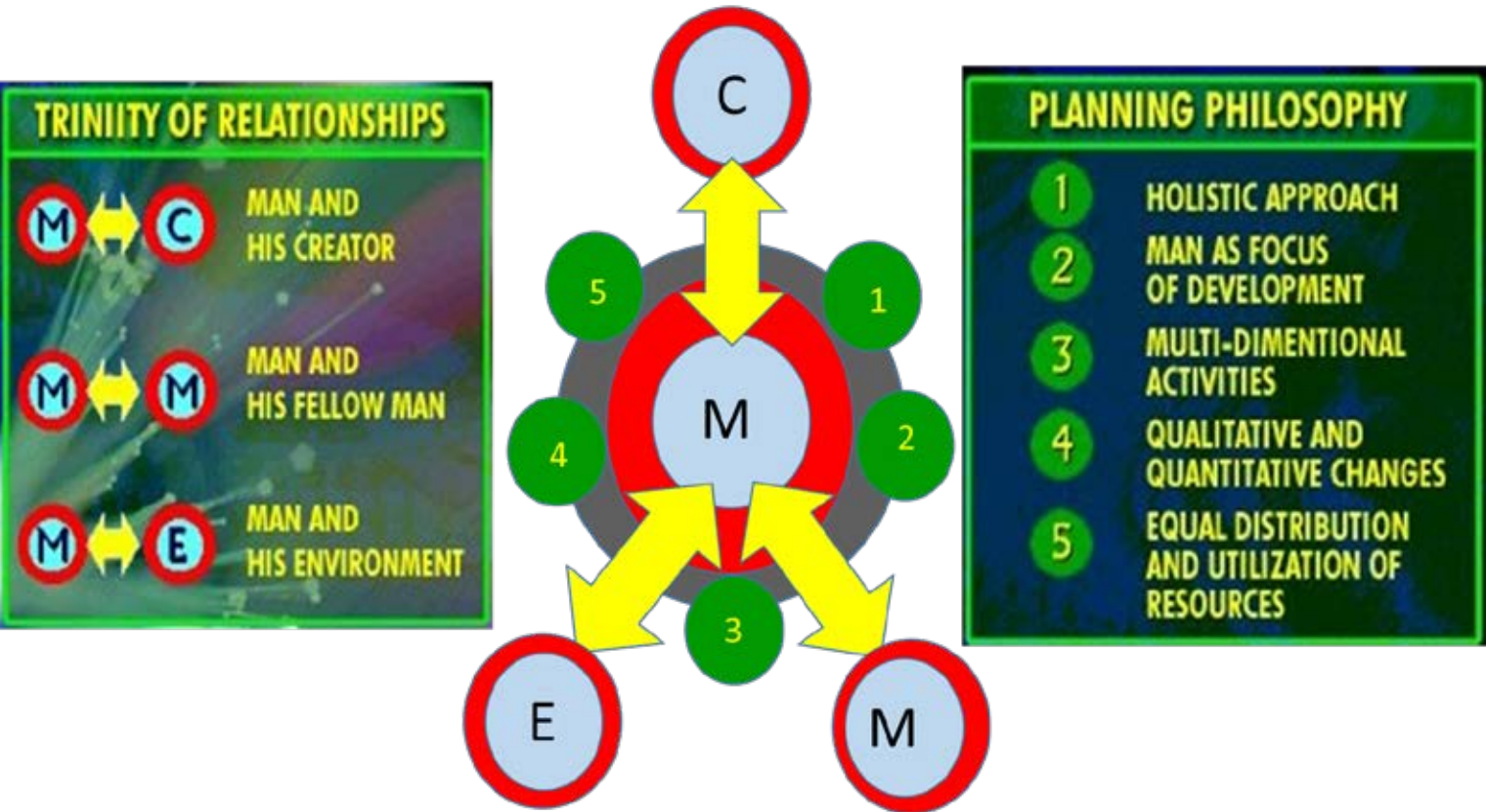
that modern cities today find very difficult to replicate.

A vision, however, would only remain as that unless the people entrusted with the role of administrators and managers played their part well. In this, history has proven beyond doubt that Perbadanan Putrajaya has far exceeded the expectations of everyone in executing its duties and responsibilities during the development of Putrajaya. Since its establishment, Perbadanan Putrajaya has proven itself time and again as an agent of progress that has not only successfully developed the city but also propelled it to greater heights over the past 25 years. The success of the enviable track record is further accentuated by various local and international awards received over the years.

Until today, Perbadanan Putrajaya's excellence in management and administrative skills continue to make Putrajaya a global benchmark in the areas of urban planning, management and administration for countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, India, Saudi Arabia, Ghana and Singapore.

Putrajaya's development places emphasis on the concepts of bringing people closer together, man closer to nature, and man closer to God. Thus, Putrajaya's development should be seen not only in the concrete aspect, as a federal administrative capital, but also in terms of building an Islamic Malay civilization. In emphasising the concept of the "intelligent garden city", Tun Dr Mahathir told Putrajaya's development planning team that he intended the city to be 'injected' with the concept of "Firdaus," which in Islam designates the highest layer of heaven. The designers conceptualised the words of Tun Dr Mahathir by consulting with Islamic scholars. Following this, the designers visited Alhambra and Córdoba located in Andalusia, southern Spain to draw inspiration from the Islamic architecture there and as a result of these, certain characteristics and Islamic atmospheres can be found throughout Putrajaya.

Putrajaya's numerous successes have not gone unnoticed. It has become the benchmark for the development of many new administrative cities all around the world. An exemplary case in point is Sejong, South Korea's new administrative city where its planners have adopted Putrajaya as their reference right from the planning stage. Due to this, both cities enjoy a close relationship right up to this very day. Prior to that Kazakhstan had also expressed its wish to make Putrajaya the twin city of its capital, Astana while the number of countries that have come to learn something from this city is huge and from around the world.



Development Doctrine

During the early days of planning, local consortium Kumpulan Perunding Kota Bistari was asked to apply the vision and the trinity doctrine of “Man and his Creator”, “Man and Man” and “Man and Nature” when it was tasked with the preparation of the Putrajaya concept plan. The objective of adopting this doctrine that advocates trinity relationships is to create a balance between both physical and human development in terms of spiritual and noble universal values that are crucial towards the sustainable progress of the country. Furthermore, the underlying aim of the doctrine is also to develop a dynamic community that has the capability and flexibility to adapt to changing values within the society and yet have the ability and desire to contribute towards improving the quality of life. This doctrine, which resulted from sensitivity towards human development significance in national development, was prepared by JPBD, which was then under Datuk Zainuddin Muhammad as its Director-General. Its inception has given rise to a new emphasis on efficient planning practices and sets clear guidelines in physical planning terms. This new approach towards planning and design has the ability to guide those involved in physical planning by helping them focus on the concept of sustainable development.

This trinity doctrine also relates to the vision of Tun Dr Mahathir who desires for Putrajaya to emerge as the futuristic

administrative capital of the nation. To the Prime Minister, Putrajaya is not only meant for the use of Malaysians today but also for future generations whose challenges may even be greater.

Putrajaya was planned based on the concept that incorporates the best practices in city planning, landscape, architecture as well as the preservation of eco-culture. This fulfils the underlying principle of the doctrine which advocates a more sustainable community and an environment that provides for a better quality of living.

Tun Dr Mahathir, in his speech at the Parliament during the presentation of the Perbadanan Putrajaya Bill on August 15, 1995 said: “Putrajaya’s development concept will give broad meaning to ‘eco culture’ maintenance, environmentally friendly as well as cultivate warm and lasting friendships. Putrajaya will be built based on the garden city concept which will allow it to grow unimpeded, coexisting naturally with the environment without encroaching on each other.” Today, it is as clear as day that the vision to develop Putrajaya through the doctrine of “Man and his Creator”, “Man and Man” and “Man and Nature” has been fulfilled with overwhelming success. This trinity relationship has given the city a very comprehensive touch in terms of spiritual, humane interaction and strong connection with nature.



Masterplan

Masterplan

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04. Off the Drawing Board



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Made in Malaysia by Malaysians

Unlike previous projects like the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) and Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), the development of Putrajaya was made possible entirely by home grown talent and that distinction gave it the undisputable right to wear the 'Made in Malaysia by Malaysians' badge of honour with pride. Just before the work commenced, a final review of the master plan was made and it included a comprehensive land survey which provided precise topographical information of the area. The other aspects of the review included earthworks, the final realignment of the boulevard as well as the city's transportation network.

Upon completion of the review and commencement of work, the next challenge at hand was to make sure that the different phases were completed within the specified time frame. In order to achieve this, almost all the buildings and structures in Putrajaya were built based on the fast track plan. Through this, Perbadanan Putrajaya, Putrajaya Holdings and KLCC Projects shared a common goal of completing Putrajaya in record time and, in the process, make it the pride of the nation.

Like all fast track projects, construction work was undertaken concurrently at various locations throughout the proposed city area. The pace was frenetic and there was no room for compromises. The city of twenty precincts was to be developed in two phases with clearly-defined completion dates, Phase 1: 1996 - 2000 and Phase 2: 2000 -2010.



The design concept is a transparent and futuristic slender looking structure in line with a modern cyber city. THIS IS A DUMMY PICTURE

Seri Saujana Bridge

The Seri Saujana bridge is a new bridge concept combining a hybrid of two independent support systems of symmetric cable-stayed cables and a parabolic arch bridge and make them complement and work with each other seamlessly to provide a sound proven system which can be used for longer span bridges which are located in earth quake prone zones. The bridge was designed by PJSI Consultants, a Malaysian consulting engineering firm, as part of series of ten bridges built to provide the necessary access from the various high ways to the Core Island housing the new central administrative city of Putrajaya.

The first support system consists of two independent cable stayed systems each is made of 22 symmetric front cable-stayed tension cables supported by one an inclined sword shape pylons, which are inclined backwards from the vertical axis by an angle of 12° and from the horizontal axis by 78° and each pylon is counter balanced by 20 back stays cables fanned into two planes and anchored into the ground by a static counter weight silt filled .caisson.

The 22 main stay cables are fanned in one plane and anchored into the central spine 2 main webs by specially designed anchorage blocks and be able to carry 76% of the total theoretical static and dynamic loads as specified in the British and American codes of practice.

The parabolic-arch system, was designed with inclined vertical hangers which are anchored to

the external wing girders of the bridge deck and is able to carry 24% of the total theoretical static and dynamic loads as specified in the British and American codes of practice.

The bridge was designed with a particular design concept to have an innovative new bridge concept symbolizing a new advanced developed city and be able to reflect bold transparent, elegant and futuristic slender looking structure, with an overall single span length of 300m and total width of 32m without having bridge bearings or expansion joints. The bridge consists of dual three lane carriageways. The bridge's minimum clear height above the lake water is around 23 metres.

It is a unique structure provoking many engineers with questions during conception and execution of the works. Not all of them could be invalidated straight off. No similar bridge of comparable dimensions was known to the designer and specialist subcontractors at that time. The design concept of the bridge was selected to be the first of its own kind in the world and ?

Initially, The Bridge was designed using the latest advanced softwares at that period of time starting from Sap 4 which was verified later by SAP2000 and STAAD Pro –old version during the years 1998-1999, but without an advanced non-linear analysis, however we have run it recently using Midas software for the purpose of nonlinear analysis having to verify the accuracy of our past assumptions and design procedures and the results was outstanding proving that the Bridge design is Robust, safe and economical after almost 18 years life span without having any maintenance program or any maintenance attendance through out the past 18 years load cases for the peak hour/worst scenario.

Ir. Abdul Karim Ibrahim, Director, PJSI Consultants



A City Takes Shape

August 29, 1995 was a historic day for Putrajaya as it officially marked the day work commenced on the city that was considered the largest township project in Malaysia as well as the whole of Southeast Asia. With Perbadanan Putrajaya as the local authority and masterplan owner, there was an overwhelming sense of confidence in the project's viability and success. The buoyant sentiment was further enhanced by the inclusion of Putrajaya Holdings as master developer while the task of turning the masterplan into reality fell on the capable hands of KLCC Projects Berhad.

In the midst of the upbeat mood, those involved were also mindful that the road ahead was fraught with challenges and knew that it was in their best interest to capitalise on their collective strength and confidence to make Putrajaya a resounding success. Needless to say, everyone was prepared to put in long hours and make all the necessary sacrifices to achieve the goal. Moving from the drawing board to the actual construction phase meant the involvement of additional parties in the mega project. These included developers, designers, builders, financiers, administrative and human resource executives as well as policy and legal experts. As things progressed smoothly, it soon became common sight to have teams of professionals huddling together to study plans, concept drawings and sketches as scores of construction workers and heavy equipment went about doing the necessary in the vicinity.

On September 10, 1996, Tun Dr Mahathir officiated over a ground-breaking ceremony for Putrajaya's Government Precinct which was designated as Precinct 1, the heart and soul of Putrajaya. Nearly two months later, on November 5, 1996, Putrajaya Holdings officially began Phase 1 development which involved the construction of government buildings, supporting infrastructure and network of roads which covered a total area of seven million square-feet.

This massive area included Perdana Putra and Seri Perdana, the Prime Minister's Office and official residence, respectively as well as 5,794 units of government quarters, 1,553 private residential units and key landmarks such as the Putrajaya Lake, the Wetlands, Putra Mosque and Dataran Putra. Construction of Perdana Putra, situated on the most strategically located hill in the area, began on January 28, 1997. The Main Block housing the Prime Minister's Office was topped with a glazed mosaic main dome while the West Wing and East Wing was for the Deputy Prime Minister and the Chief Secretary to the Government, respectively. Like Perdana Putra, the construction of Seri Perdana also took two years to complete and both were ready for occupation by early 1999. Located at Persiaran Seri Perdana, Precinct 10, the Prime Minister's Official Residence complex epitomised the combined grandeur of Malay, Islamic and European architectural, landscape and design heritage. In addition, the 17 hectare Seri Perdana was built according to the contour of the hill it was located on in order to preserve the geographical structure and natural environment. This non-invasive construction practice was in line with the planning concept of Putrajaya as a Garden City.



Pix of Sekolah Presint 8 (1), Sekolah Presint 9 (1), Dewan Presint 8, Surau Presint 8, Pasar Presint 8, Medan Selera Presint 8, Library Presint 8.
Before and after pix will be good.

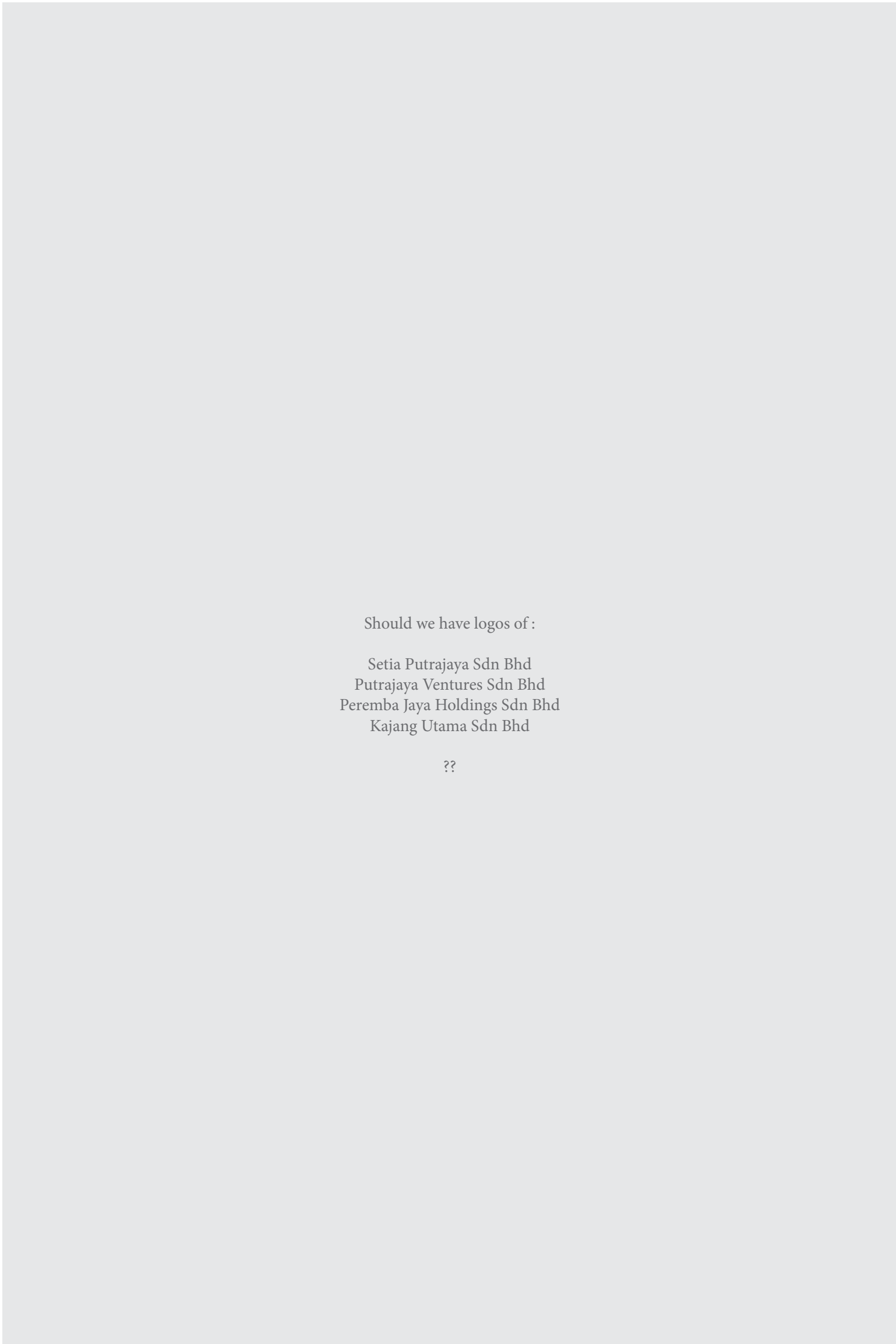


PMO under construction

Cutting Edge Techniques (sub-topic to change)

Although the building of the Putra Mosque, one of the most iconic buildings in Putrajaya, began at around the same time as Seri Perdana and Perdana Putra but it only completed in September 1999 due to the larger amount of time needed to complete its many fine details and finishes. The Putra Mosque construction would have taken even much longer if not for the use of modern technology. Thanks to cutting edge techniques employed, six weeks was all it took for builders to cast and elaborately decorate the perfectly shaped dome that was made, upon the personal request of Tun Dr Mahathir, to mirror that of the majestic Zahir Mosque in his Alor Star home town. Even before its completion, the Putra Mosque was already fast gaining reputation as a popular destination for both domestic and foreign visitors. This allure is partly due to its eye-catching architecture and strategic location in Putra Square.

Phase Two, which began at the turn of the new millennium, involved the construction of the remaining 18 million square-feet of government office space, other key landmark developments comprising of the 4.2-kilometre Putrajaya Boulevard, the Putrajaya International Convention Centre, scenic bridges, supporting infrastructure as well as 30 million square-feet of commercial space and residential homes. The other buildings that were built during those early stages were the Putrajaya Central Police Station, Fire and Rescue Department and Putrajaya Hospital. These key service centres, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs complex, were completed and began operations in September 2001.



Should we have logos of :

Setia Putrajaya Sdn Bhd
Putrajaya Ventures Sdn Bhd
Peremba Jaya Holdings Sdn Bhd
Kajang Utama Sdn Bhd

??

Putrajaya Holdings Joint Venture Partners

In general, the development of Putrajaya was divided into two main physical areas, the core area and the peripheral area, with a large waterbody separating them. Apart from being the main administrative section, the core area, with its trademark grand civic buildings, assumes the role of the symbolic heart for the city as well as for the entire nation. At the same time, it is also home to hotels, shopping centres, commercial offices, exhibition and convention centres, private colleges, a private medical centre together with a variety of facilities designed to boost tourism within the city. On the other hand, peripheral area is designed to encompass 13 residential neighbourhoods which are home to some 67,000 units of residential dwellings.

Most, if not all, of the construction work was carried out by several Putrajaya Holdings joint venture companies. Setia Putrajaya Sdn Bhd (a joint venture between Putrajaya Holdings, SP Setia Bhd and Abad Kilat Sdn Bhd) developed various plots of land around the city including Precinct 7 (89 hectares), Precinct 9 (186 hectares) and Precinct 15 (1,283 hectares). Apart from that, the joint venture company was also involved in developing a commercial area in Precinct 1, Perdana Putra and Seri Perdana.

Putrajaya Ventures Sdn Bhd (a partnership with Hong Leong Properties Bhd) developed a 233 hectare area in Precinct 8 of which 63 hectares were for residential development consisting of bungalows, semi-detached houses, garden terrace houses, apartments and condominiums. Senandung Budiman Sdn Bhd (in partnership with Malaysian Plantations Bhd) developed 542 hectares in Precincts 2, 3, 16 and 17 into apartments, condominiums, townhouses and commercial units. Among all, homes in Precinct 16 are deemed as one of the most sought after addresses as they is located next to the Deputy Prime Minister’s residence.

Peremba Jaya Holdings Sdn Bhd (jointly owned with Peremba (M) Sdn Bhd) developed a 424 hectare area in Precinct 11 and constructed 9,700 units of bungalows, bungalow lots, link and semi-detached houses, condominiums and commercial units. Kajang Utama Sdn Bhd (a joint venture with Malaysian Resources Corp Bhd) developed Precinct 10 and 12 which covered a total area of 134.48 hectares.

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Utility Providers Move In

As work progressed and buildings began to take shape, utility providers such as Tenaga Nasional Berhad, Telekom Malaysia Berhad and Gas Malaysia Berhad began initiating their part of the plan to provide the much needed services to Putrajaya. Each company had to adhere strictly to their allocated time window to complete their tasks as failure to comply would mess up the carefully planned schedule of other parties involved.

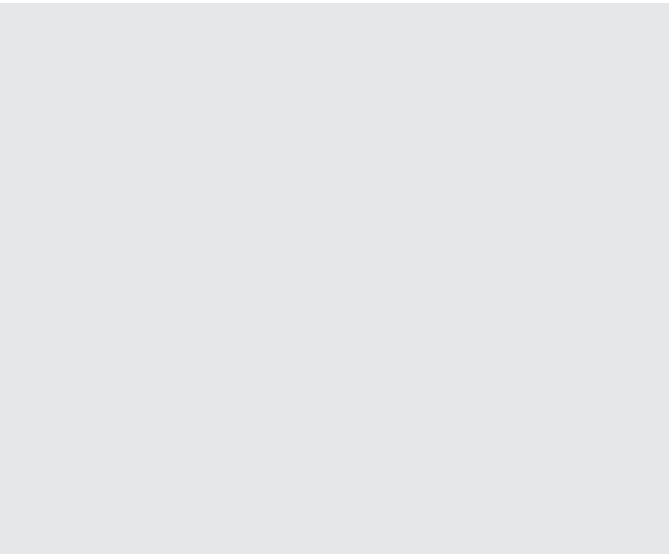
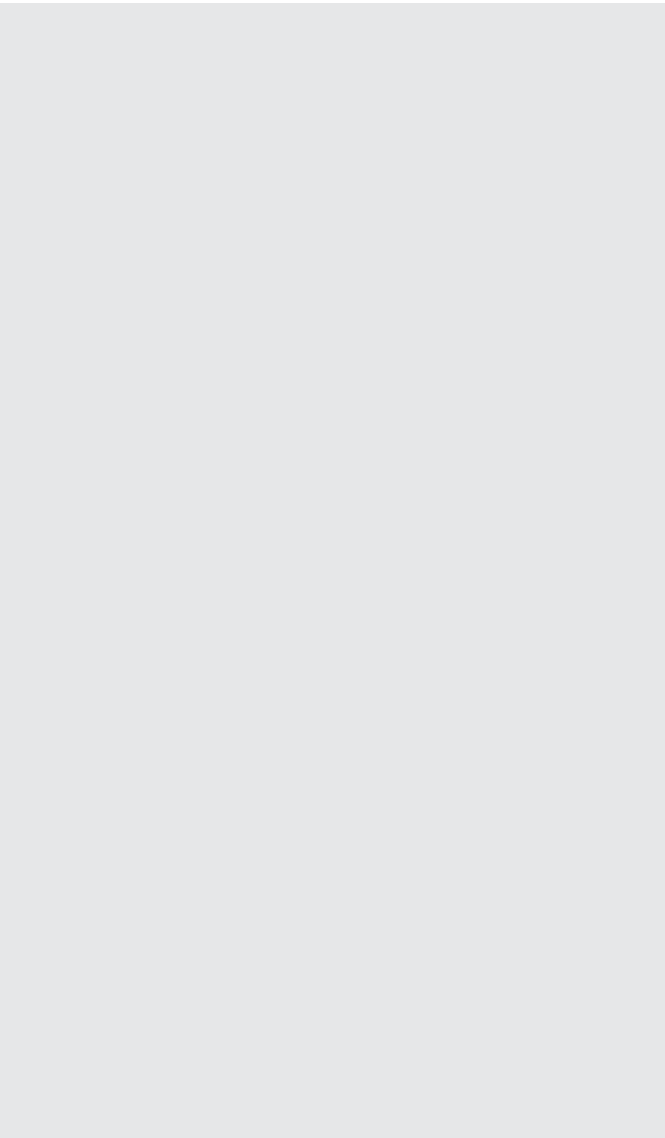
In a show of their deep commitment to the common cause, these utility companies invested heavily in Putrajaya with Telekom Malaysia leading the way with some RMI billion worth of infrastructure installations.

Buoyed by the prevalent positive working culture, everyone involved, from consultants to construction company developers, rose to the occasion and responded brilliantly to the rapid pace and intensity of development. Leading by example, Perbadanan Putrajaya employees often worked late into the night to ensure that work was on schedule and had no qualms about raising issues with contractors when their requirements and high standards were not met with satisfactorily. The development of Putrajaya reached another milestone when its first hotel, Putrajaya Shangri-La, opened its doors to members of the public in February 2003. The presence of the prestigious six-star luxury hotel, built according to the concept of 'hotel within a park and park within a hotel', filled the gap for hospitality services in Putrajaya.

Located near Taman Putra Perdana in Precinct 1, the Putrajaya Shangri-La was completed in just 16 months. This record breaking feat was made possible in part by the tireless efforts of Tun Azizan who made sure that the construction time-line was strictly followed in order for the hotel to start operations as soon as the last workman left the premise. Just three months later, the construction of Alamanda Mall, Putrajaya's first shopping centre, commenced amid much fanfare at a 9.6 hectare site in Precinct 1 on May 5, 2003.

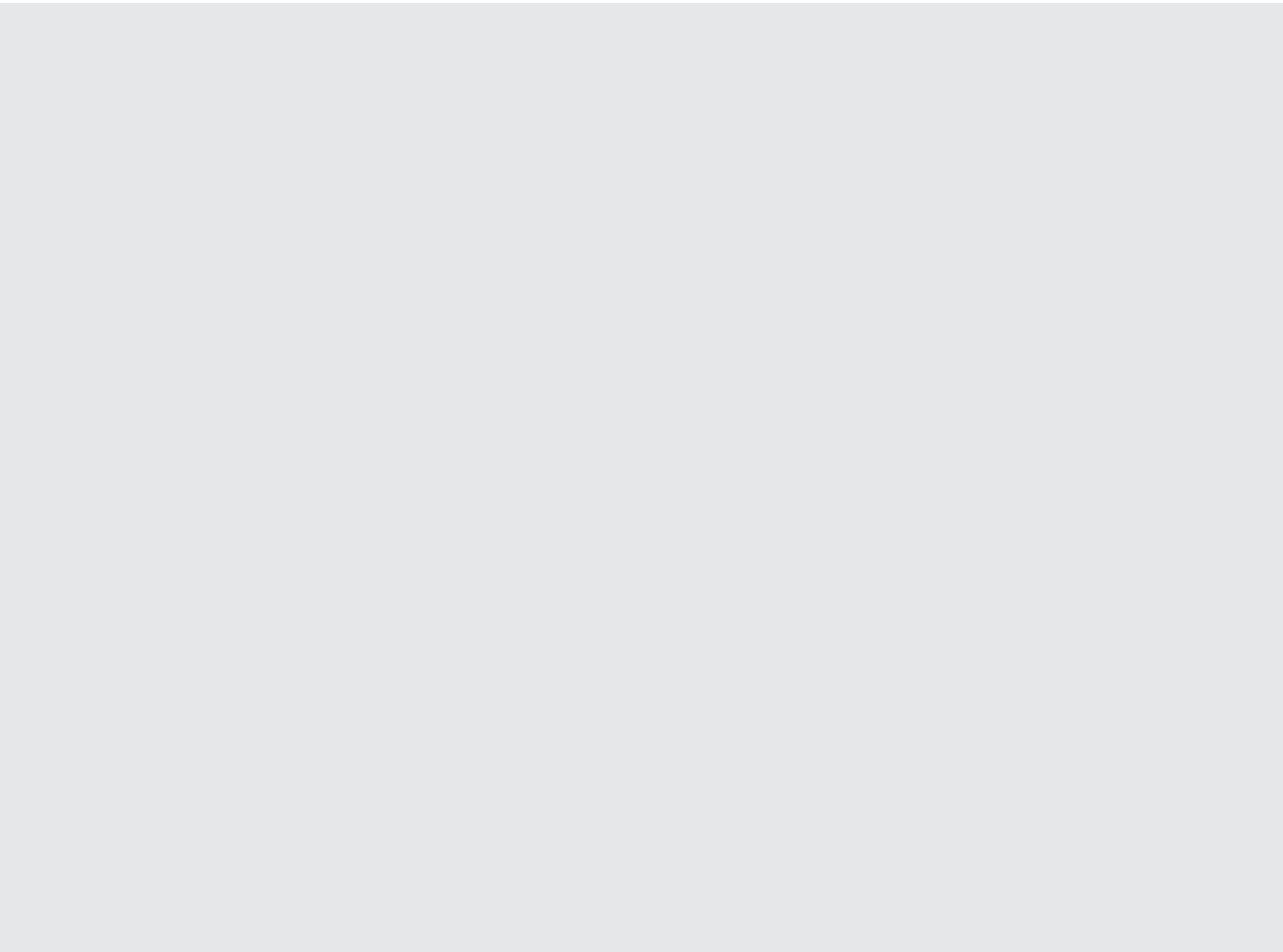


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Open Spaces For All

The time was also ripe to realise the drawing board plans for open spaces around Putrajaya. In line with the prevalent Garden City concept, more than a third of the total area (37.6 percent) in Putrajaya was reserved for open public spaces. These included large metropolitan parks, urban parks and city parks along with buffer areas, lakes and wetlands.

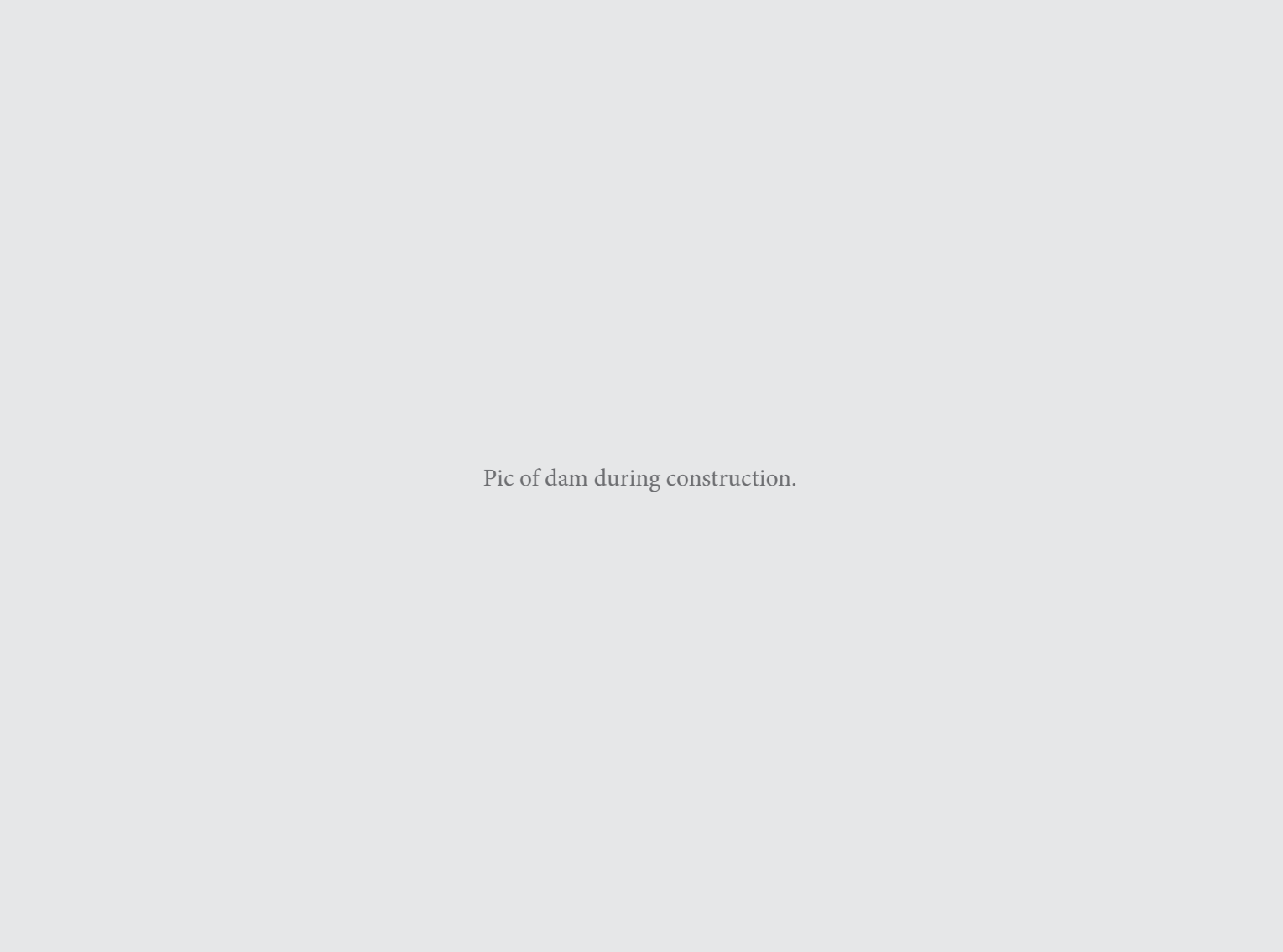
In order to facilitate public convenience, a variety of supporting infrastructure that blended seamlessly with the natural landscape was built. Apart from becoming major tourist destinations, these open spaces also fulfilled Putrajaya’s aspirations to be environmentally friendly and supportive of the unique and fragile urban ecosystem.



Diagrammatic site plan of open spaces from Megat.



Pic of PM officates the main dam on August 20, 2002.



Pic of dam during construction.

Construction of Lake & Wetland

The plan to build the lake and wetlands in Putrajaya have been around since the idea of the city was born. “Tun Dr Mahathir and the planners agreed that Putrajaya must have man-made water bodies to add beauty to the city and also to provide natural cooling effect for the administrative capital,” recalls Datuk Ahmad Bakri Shabdin who was then the Deputy Secretary-General in the Prime Minister’s Department and also the Secretary of the Putrajaya Development Main Committee. This was a challenge because there were only a few knee-deep streams in the area that flowed from the water catchment area located near Universiti Putra Malaysia, which forms part of the Langat River Basin. However, with careful planning and hard work, the developers managed to complete the wetlands in August 1998 and the lake in May 2002. The Prime Minister officiated the opening of the main dam on August 20, 2002.

Although Tun Dr Mahathir emphasized the exclusion of foreign participation in the development of Putrajaya, he did provide relief in areas where Malaysia lacked expertise. His only condition was for the foreign experts to form joint ventures with local consultants and ensure that there is proper transfer of knowledge. This form of cooperation was seen in the maintenance and up keep of urban lakes in Putrajaya where there was an acknowledged dearth of local experts.

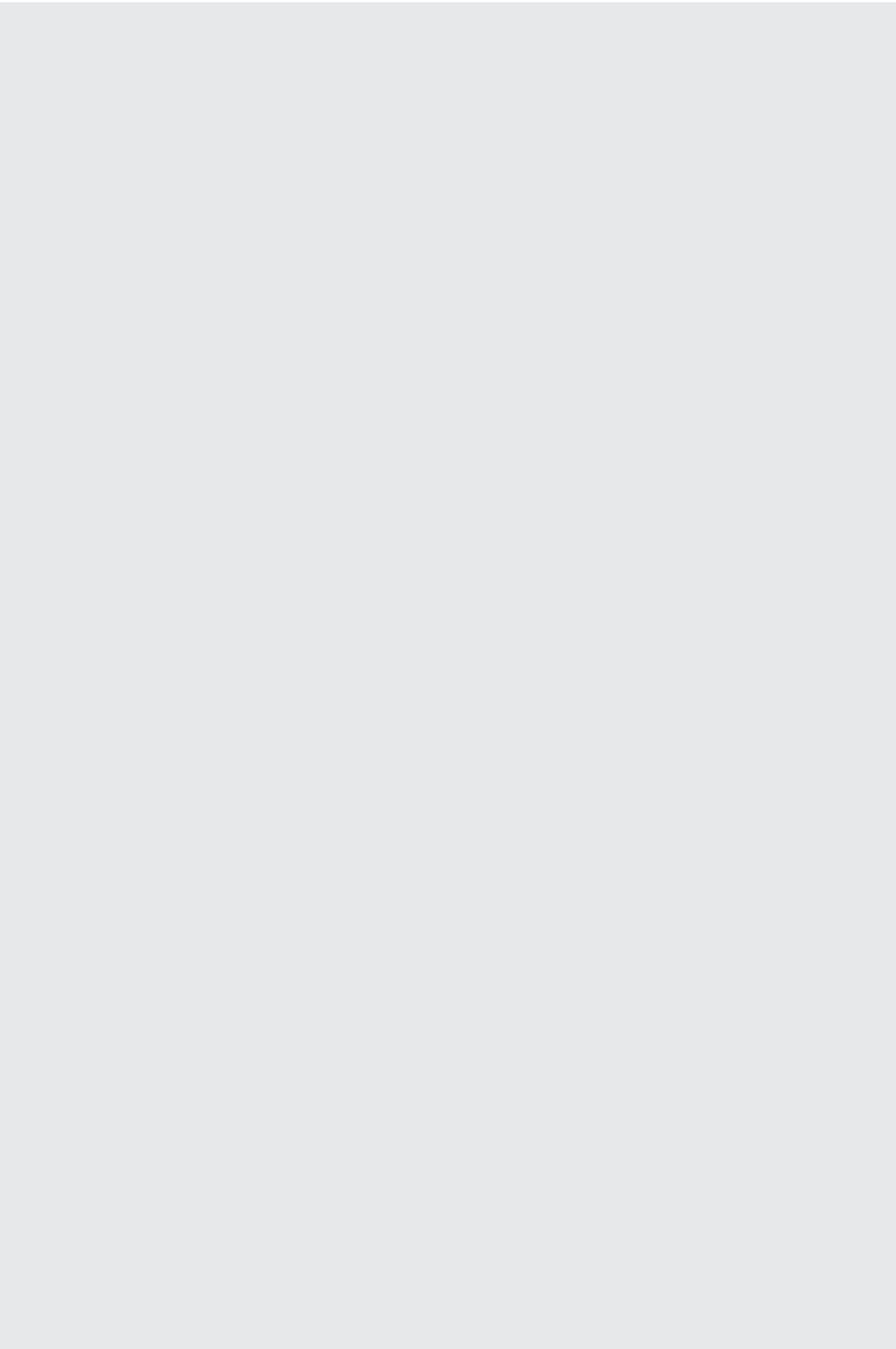


Pic of bicycle lane.
Bas NGV yang dulu dulu.

Planned Citywide Integrated Transportation System

To re-write.

The development of Putrajaya also took into account matters related to public transportation which was aimed at providing an efficient transportation system for both intercity and intracity movement. While drawing up the integrated public transportation system, planners put in place a detailed network of buses and rail-based transportation routes to help alleviate possible traffic gridlocks in the future as the population of Putrajaya was sure to increase in tandem with its growing importance. Later, in 2004, the monorail project was deferred due to financial constraints. Together with the extensive public transportation system, a vast network of bicycle and walking trails that criss-cross the city is the perfect solution to traffic related pollution problems that have plagued many heavily populated cities throughout the world.



Technology for the Future

To re-look. We planned, but did not materialized. Kamaruzzaman to look at this.

Since its inception, Putrajaya has been inseparable from the word intelligent as it has been Tun Dr Mahathir's intention for it to develop into a modern, cosmopolitan and smart city that is well equipped to face the challenges of the 21st century. With this forward-looking concept in mind, homes in Putrajaya are equipped with a choice of either fibre-optic, co-axial or copper connectivity to provide a hassle-free lifestyle at centred around the convenience of smartphones, tablets and personal computers. Technology also comes to the fore in Putrajaya schools where the use of computers and information technology (IT) curriculum provide cutting-edge knowledge for the students who will one day be the future leaders of our nation. In terms of security, homes in Putrajaya are electronically connected via remote control interactive close-circuit video systems to the nearest police stations, fire stations and hospitals.

The Putrajaya Hospital at Precinct 7 is well on its way to become a smart hospital in the near future through the use of the state-of-the-art Total Hospital Information System (THIS). Together with the National Cancer Institute (IKN), also in Precinct 7, which is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities to treat and effectively manage cancer patients, the two hospitals now serve as role models for all future healthcare institutions in the country. Likewise, Putrajaya is home to a multitude of smart buildings that embrace technology to improve cost-effectiveness and productivity. Here, technology has specifically proven its worth in the power usage management, building automation and telecommunication services segments.



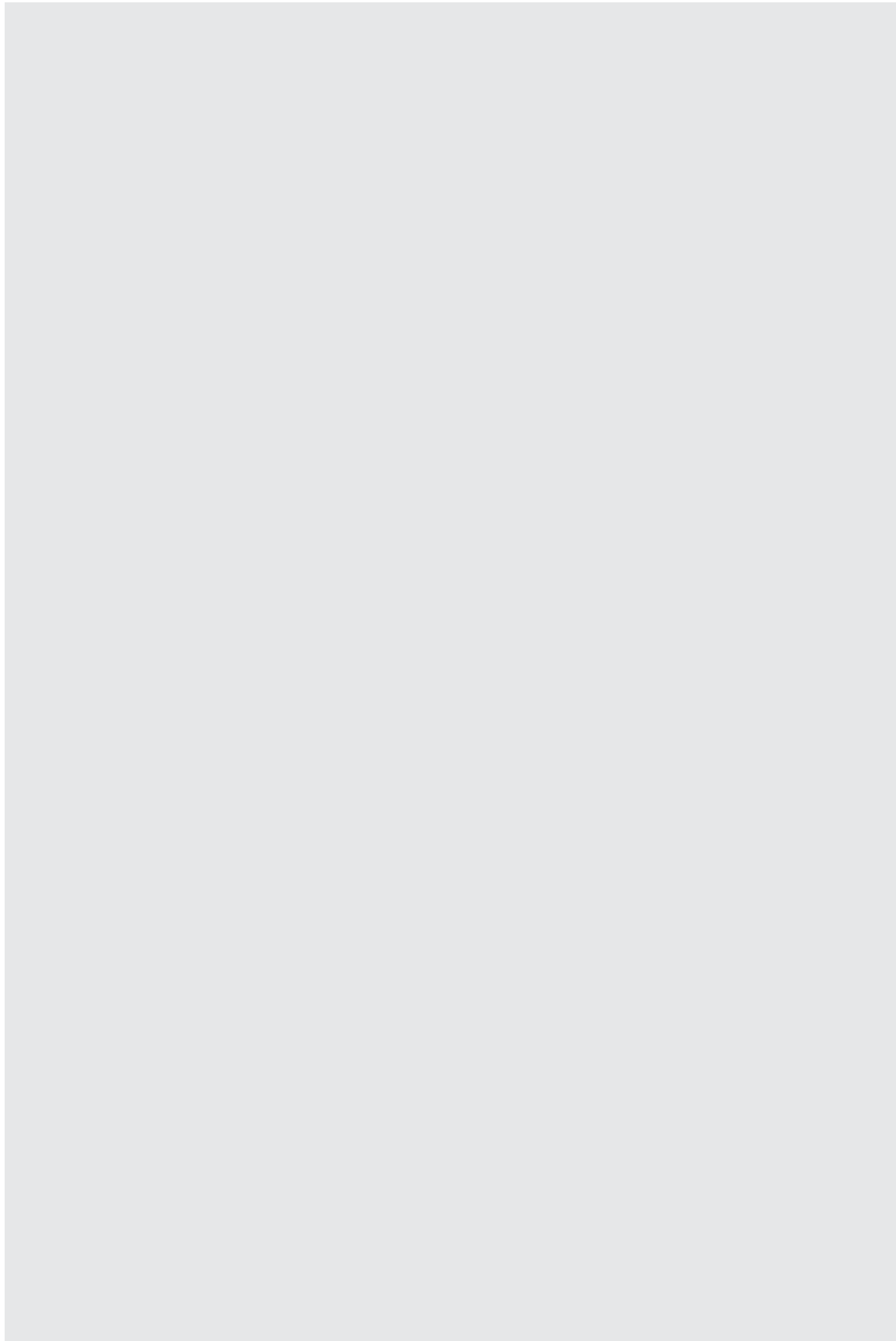
Multimedia Super Corridor

Looking back, Putrajaya was the perfect candidate for the Federal Government to give modern technology a firm foothold. Right from the beginning, the city was identified as the final and most crucial link in the government's plan to fully integrate the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) through the development of Putrajaya, Cyberjaya and KLIA which all lie to the south Kuala Lumpur. Spanning some 15 kilometres wide and 50 kilometres long and covering a total area of 750 square kilometres, the MSC extends all the way southwards from the Petronas Twin Towers, bringing progress and introducing modern innovations to all who live within its borders. Places within the MSC are equipped with a high-speed integrated telecommunications network that meet the needs of the latest value-added telecommunication, information and multi-media services. The advantages do not end there as there are plans in the pipeline for the MSC to be connected to the National Information Superhighway as well as the boarder the worldwide network. This will turn Putrajaya into an intelligent city and an information hub that is dynamic in terms of international trade and foreign relations activities as well as create an excellent and effective government administrative centre that caters not only to Malaysians but also provides for the international trading community as a whole. Today, all those involved in making Putrajaya such a resounding success, can look back with satisfaction in their eyes as all their sacrifices and hard work have paid off handsomely. The emergence of Putrajaya as the model city of the future clearly demonstrates the uncanny ability of our creative local talent to successfully transform a masterplan into a beautiful, modern and vibrant city. The many inspiring stories about their aptitude in making the best out of their knowledge in architecture, engineering, technological innovation and vision will be told and retold for many generations to come.





05. Navigating a National Pride



SHOWING THE WAY

Ever since he made the official announcement to the entire country, Putrajaya never failed to get Tun Dr Mahathir's undivided attention throughout the course of its development as well as subsequent coming of age to become a thriving world class city that is peerless in many aspects.

The Prime Minister generally kept abreast with progress through detailed weekly reports during his post cabinet meeting on Wednesdays with Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid who was both the Chief Secretary to the Government as well as Secretary to the Cabinet. Those meetings were never brief as Tun Ahmad Sarji, at that time, had just been appointed as Chairman of the Putrajaya Development Main Committee.

Apart from updating the Prime Minister on the latest developments, Tun Ahmad Sarji also tapped Tun Dr Mahathir's wisdom and extensive experience on how best to propel the city to greater heights. Tun Ahmad Sarji was rarely disappointed as Tun Dr Mahathir demonstrated great leadership and constantly came up with a variety of useful and innovative ideas that challenged the planners, consultants and contractors working on site to give their best to the project. The personal touch and interest from the top leadership to ensure that everything was on an even keel was extremely crucial to the multibillion ringgit project that was executed on a fast-track basis using solely local talent and expertise.

A classic case in point of Tun Dr Mahathir's keen enthusiasm and unparalleled concern took place during the early days of the project at a meeting where officials were in the midst of evaluating development concepts presented by the six consultant firms. Everyone present was taken aback when the Prime Minister strode in unexpectedly and began actively taking part in the shortlisting process. This level of commitment was exemplary to say the least as Tun Dr Mahathir could have taken the easy way out and waited, like the rest of his colleagues, for the decision to be presented during their cabinet meeting.



CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP

Putrajaya’s success was paramount to everyone concerned and this notion is further exemplified in an incident related to land acquisition. During his telephone conversation with the then Selangor Menteri Besar (Chief Minister) Tan Sri Muhammad Haji Muhammad Taib, Tun Ahmad Sarji impressed upon the latter that the matter had to be resolved quickly despite knowing that matters of that nature were complicated and required careful legal consideration at the state level. Needless to say, the matter was speedily expedited and subsequently absolved within the stipulated two week deadline. This incident clearly demonstrated the importance of Putrajaya to the nation.



FERVENT NATIONALISTIC SPIRIT

At the same time, Tun Dr Mahathir’s strong patriotic and nationalistic spirit was so fervent that he found time in his hectic schedule to express feelings in the form of a poem for the local talent who help built the city he so loved. Former JPBD Director-General, Datuk Zainuddin Muhammad clearly remembered the chain of events that inspired Tun Dr Mahathir to wax lyrical about the commendable abilities of Malaysians in handling mega projects. While listening to Cesar Pelli present a seminar paper in Holland, Zainuddin and the other Malaysian delegates heard the Petronas Twin Towers architect, rather insensitively, say that Malaysia could not take pride in having any mega project to call its own. Citing the Petronas Twin Towers as an example, Pelli said one tower was built by a Japanese contractor and another was constructed by a South Korean contractor while the skyscraper was designed by him, an Argentinian. Tun Dr Mahathir was clearly displeased after the matter was brought to his attention and when the time came to develop Putrajaya, the Prime Minister, determined to prove Pelli wrong, made it absolutely clear that the project had to be handled exclusively by local experts.



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PERSONAL ATTENTION

As thing got under way, the Prime Minister poured his heart into the project and was a regular feature at the Putrajaya construction site. He invested hours in exploring novel ideas related to the development of his pet development at that time. At one time, cabinet ministers were taken by surprise when he enthusiastically shared the latest progress by passing around the meeting room a piece of tile he had just selected.

Concurring with thoughts about Tun Dr Mahathir unrestraint enthusiasm, a senior Perbadanan Putrajaya staff recalls a revealing incident where Tun Dr Mahathir found himself in an awkward situation after the car he was driving broke down without warning at the work site. Unperturbed, the Prime Minister simply alighted and hitched a ride from a passing dump truck. Datuk Bakri meanwhile recalls how Tun Dr Mahathir rode his horse to take a closer look at the work being done on the construction site.

Even when away from the work site, it is common knowledge that Tun Dr Mahathir regularly used a powerful telescope to keep tab on the progress from a distance. Once, he quizzed an officer in charge about meeting deadlines after noticing, through the telescope, the deployment of only a handful of workers.



INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTION

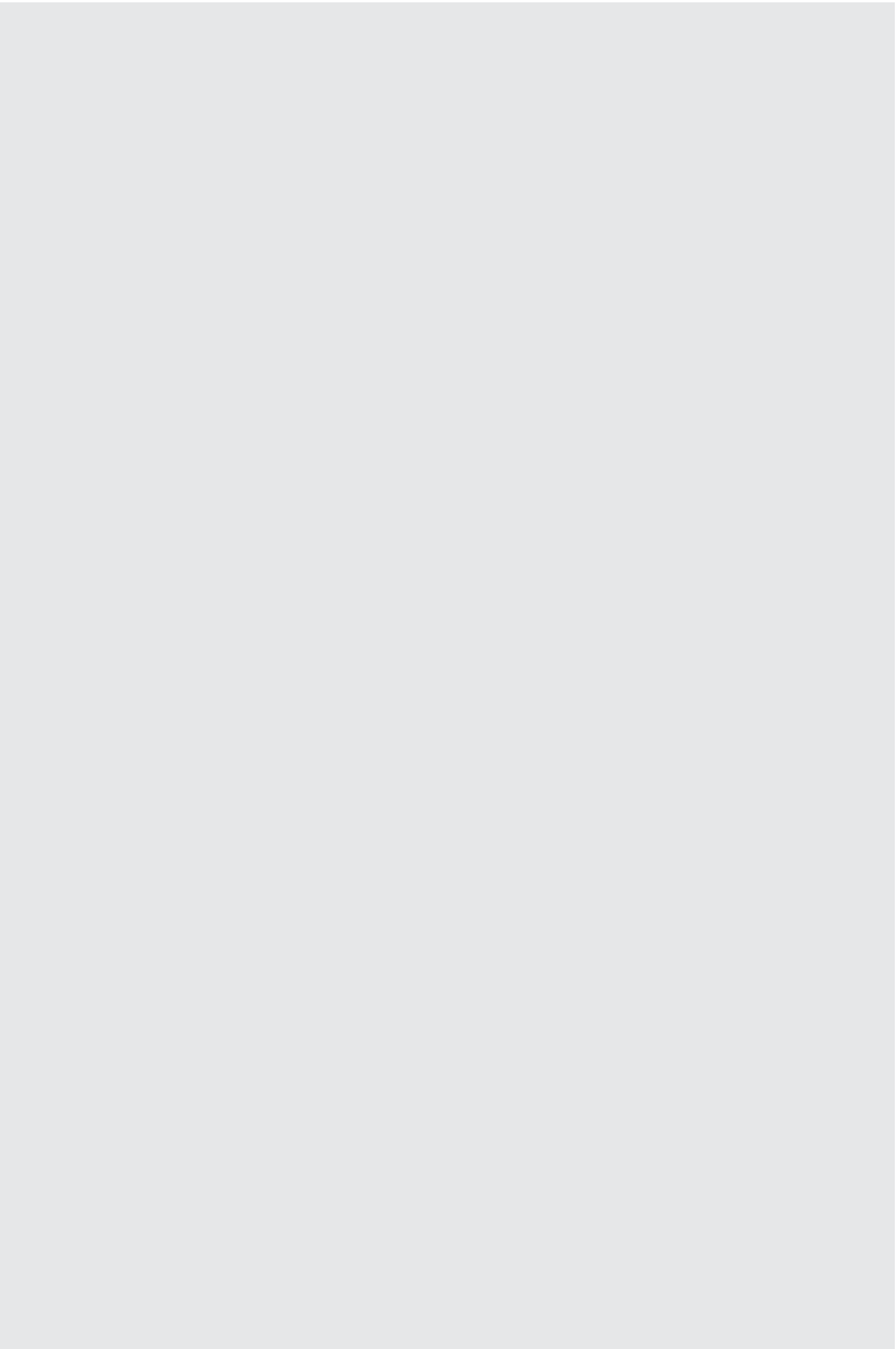
If Tun Dr Mahathir is recognised as the founder and source of inspiration for Putrajaya, then Tun Azizan is widely considered to be the prime mover and implementer of the country's largest realty development. Tun Azizan's appointment to lead Perbadanan Putrajaya automatically came with the heavy responsibility of ensuring that the project progressed smoothly and achieved the desired outcome. The corporate leader's credentials were impressive and his ability to lead was beyond doubt as, prior to that, he made waves by emerging as the person responsible for establishing an impeccable reputation for Petronas in the international field. Taking the long term view, Tun Azizan started off by streamlining operations at Perbadanan Putrajaya to put the project on firm footing.

Above all, he wanted the entity to operate like a corporate company with its employees having greater organisational responsibilities while enjoying better salary scales and allowances compared to their counterparts in the public sector. Turning back the clock, a senior staff recalls that Tun Azizan adopted the procedure manual of KLCC Projek Sdn Bhd, a member of the company under Petronas, for use at Perbadanan Putrajaya as well as implemented useful weekly management meetings. In order to give Perbadanan Putrajaya as a truly corporate entity, Tun Azizan also ensured that the corporation's email address used the .net domain instead of the usual .gov adopted by other government departments.



NEW TALENT, FRESH IDEAS

A firm believer in the 'new blood brings changes' philosophy since his days in Petronas, Malaysia's national oil and gas company, Tun Azizan gave Tan Sri Hassan Merican a very senior post despite that the latter was just 36 at that time. Tun Azizan once again applied this philosophy when he helmed Perbadanan Putrajaya. He once again brought in young talents and gave them the freedom of expression to contribute towards the betterment of the city.



DESERVING PRAISE

Throughout his tenure, Tun Azizan shared a very close relationship with Tun Dr Mahathir. The deep respect and understanding that the duo had for each other could be traced all the way back to 1981 when the former served as the latter’s chief private secretary for four years. Having unrestricted direct access to Tun Dr Mahathir aided Tun Azizan tremendously in turning Putrajaya into the envisioned city that is set amidst lush gardens. Success in mega projects is nothing new to Tun Azizan as the Petronas Twin Towers was completed and claimed its rightful place as the tallest building in the world during his seven year tenure, starting from 1988, in Petronas. Another senior Perbadanan Putrajaya staff recalls Tun Azizan as a person whose clear understanding of architecture and refined taste in design was reflected in many of the buildings he oversaw during their construction like the Petronas Twin Towers, Perbadanan Putrajaya Complex and Asy-Syakirin Mosque near the Kuala Lumpur City Centre. At the same time, the senior staff also remembers that the first president of Perbadanan Putrajaya, as a rather soft spoken person, disliked glaring, gaudy and striking colours in design but instead preferred soft and pastel colours. Known for his strong views on things, Tun Azizan always avoided literal translations of design features and often challenged his talented team to opt for the subtle approach. The best example for this can be seen when an idea was put forward to adopt several designs on the songket, a much sought after Malaysian textile, for use on building facade. Tun Azizan, took to the idea immediately but requested everyone present to use the design with nuance and use their creativity to come up with modern representations of the different traditional compositions.



PUTRAJAYA, ALWAYS IN HIS HEART

Tun Azizan had always been extremely proud of Putrajaya. At an official Perbadanan Putrajaya function, the staff members heard for themselves from Tun Azizan’s spouse, Toh Puan Noor Aini Che Teh that the city was always on her husband’s mind and that he would share his thoughts about it everywhere he went, even at home.

Tun Azizan was far sighted in his vision for Putrajaya. Even when construction was still ongoing, he was already picturing the city filled with people going about with their daily activities and, by doing that, regularly came up with improvements on ways to make lives in Putrajaya even more meaningful and fulfilling. He had planned to draft a list of dos and don’ts to help the community in Putrajaya live a smooth and orderly life.

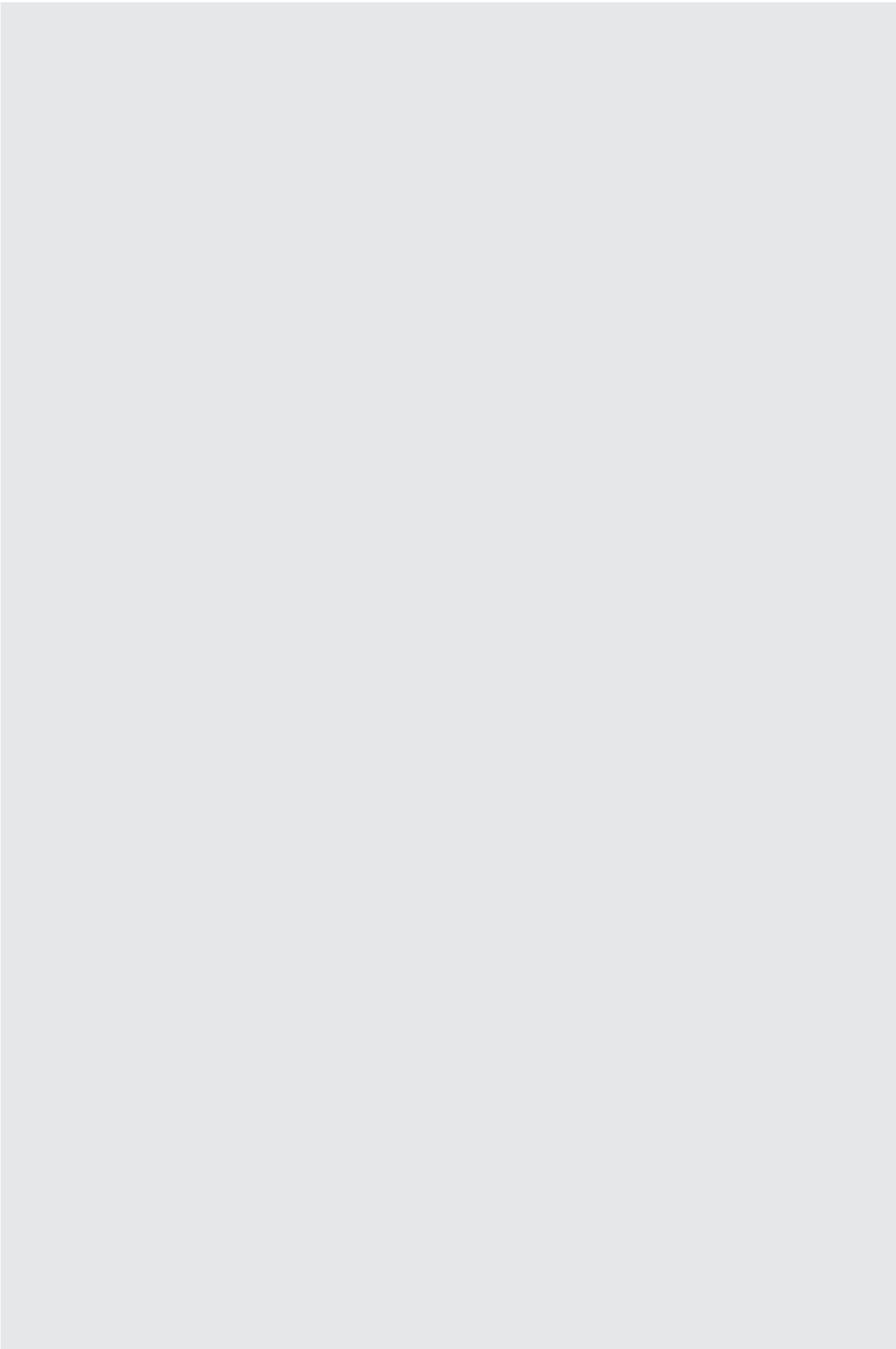
Unfortunately, Tun Azizan did not get the opportunity to see the project until its completion as the man who always took passion in his work passed away on July 14, 2004, at the age of 68 and was buried at the Muslim Cemetery in Taman Selatan, Putrajaya. Even though the Perbadanan Putrajaya building itself was only half completed at the time of his untimely passing but Tun Azizan had already given it, as well as the rest of the city, a solid foundation to build on and keep progressing well into the future.

In the book “The Quintessential Man: The Story of Tan Sri Azizan Zainul Abidin”, Tun Dr Mahathir was quoted as saying: “I know his keenness and he took the development of the city as a personal task. That was a big contribution... maybe even bigger than his achievements in Petronas.”

Five years after his passing, Tun Azizan was posthumously awarded the highest federal award, the Seri Setia Mahkota Malaysia (SSM), which carried the title ‘Tun’ in conjunction with the birthday of the 13th Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin, at Istana Negara, Kuala Lumpur.



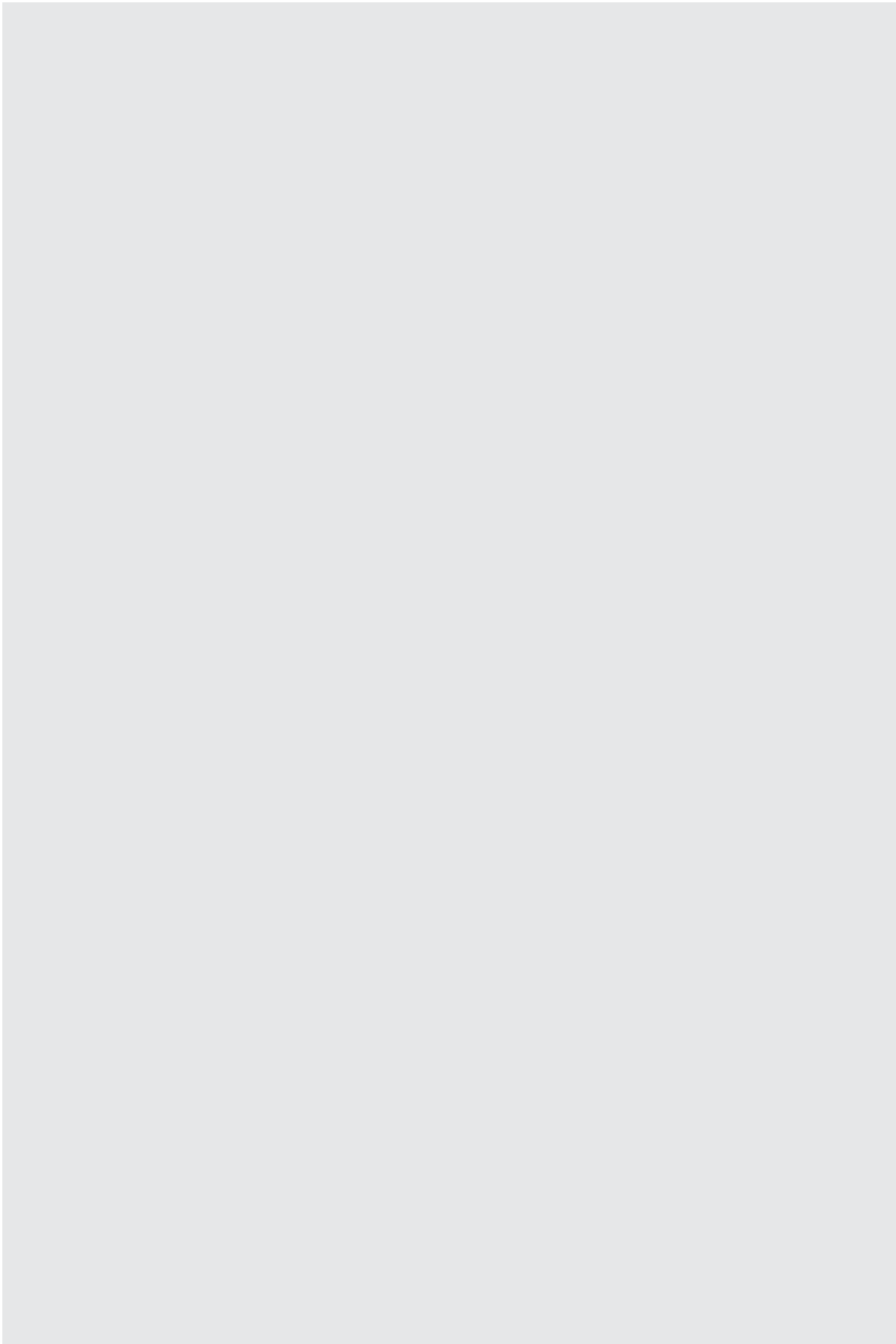
06. A Symbol of Status



PROMINENT SYMBOL

Many civilizations from the ancient world are remembered until this very day because of their magnificent cities among which are Athens, Rome, Babylon and Giza. Drawing on these comparisons, Malaysia looks to Putrajaya, the largest and most prestigious real estate project in the nation's history, as a shining symbol for the present as well as a legacy that will surely be remembered by future generations for years to come. Putrajaya captures the very essence of a new, well-planned and organized capital and symbol of the Malaysian identity that befits the nation's aspirations to become a developed nation by 2020. It also serves as the blueprint for an attractive and vibrant administrative capital that embodies national aspirations and universal values.

As a city built by Malaysians for Malaysians, Putrajaya is a timely reminder to all that Malaysia is an independent developing nation that is proud of its many momentous achievements. Through the eyes of Tun Dr Mahathir, the visionary who turned the dream many considered impossible into reality, Putrajaya is the culmination of Malaysia's progress over the years. Apart from the notable landmarks and towering skyscrapers, the eye-catching natural landscapes and open spaces in Putrajaya also serve as success symbols that our nation can look on with pride as it marches forward into the future.

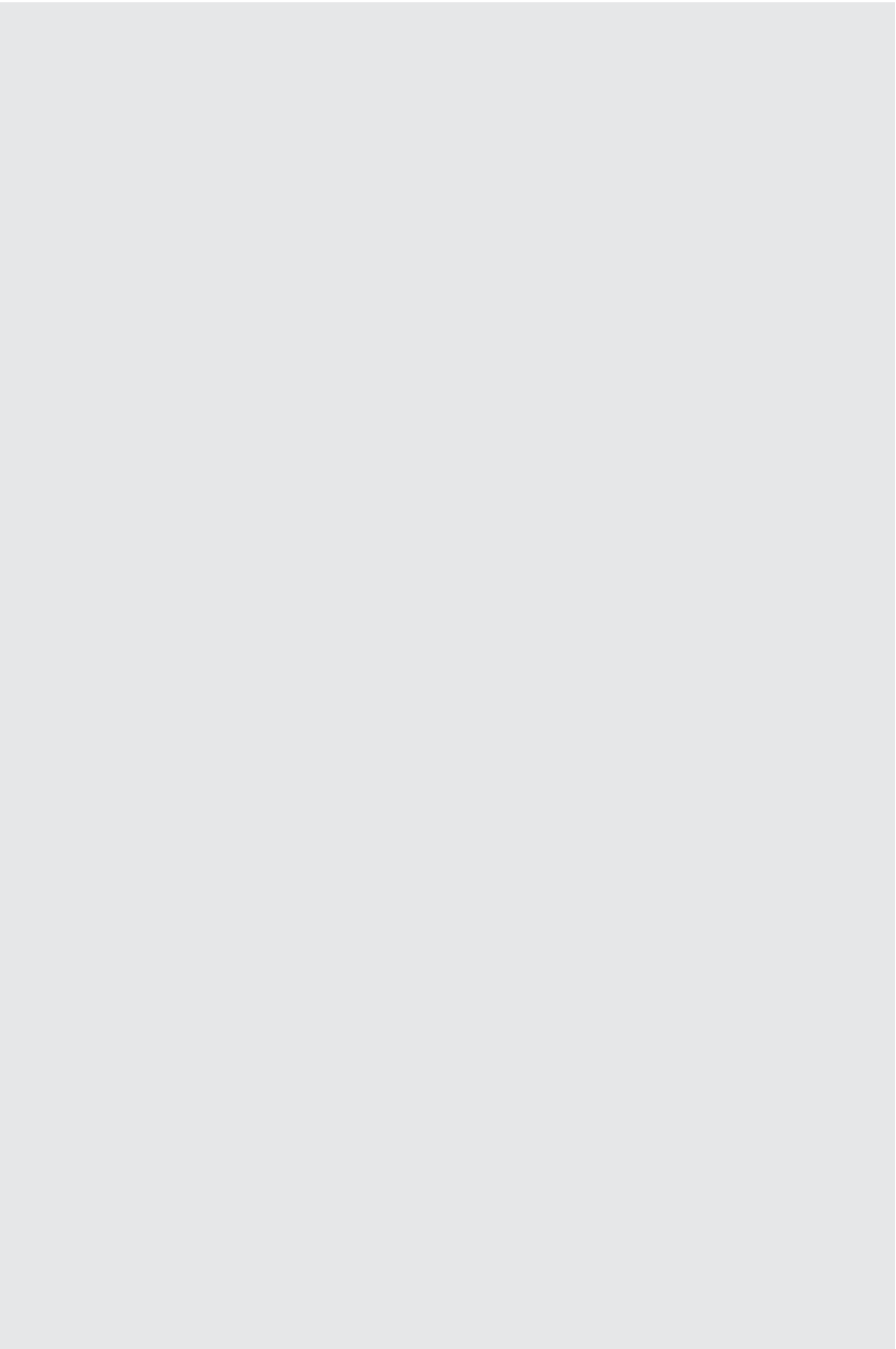


GIANT LEAP FORWARD

Even during construction, the development of Putrajaya received the closest of attention and specific laws and regulations were put in place to ensure that it progressed according to plan. After all, Putrajaya epitomised the giant leap forward for the nation to establish an efficient public administrative system that all Malaysians are proud to call their own. The illustrious history of Putrajaya bears witness to the way this multi-million ringgit success story became a reality amidst an environment filled with obstacles and challenges. Everything done had to be above board especially when it came to the huge investments made by the government while developing Putrajaya and the methods used to raise the necessary funds as they were closely scrutinised by both supporters and detractors. When the idea of Putrajaya was first mooted, the enormous size of the proposed city led critics to accuse Tun Dr Mahathir of wasting public funds by putting up an over-budgeted monument for himself.

Furthermore, the timing for Putrajaya could not have been worse. Malaysia was, at that time, still nursing the wounds inflicted by the Asian Financial Crisis that swept across the region with devastating effect. Understandably, Putrajaya's steep price tag drew unrestrained backlash from both the opposition and naysayers.

Tun Dr Mahathir, in his trademark cynical style when rebutting unfounded criticisms, said: "We build things we can use and it is meant for the government of the future. Maybe 100 years, 300 years, 1,000 years, I wouldn't know, I won't be around by then."



COURAGE TO DREAM BIG

The Prime Minister’s primary focus at that time was to industrialise the country as quickly as possible. Although his grand plan may have seemed a little far-fetched, excessive and unachievable to many at that time but most Malaysians looked up to him as a leader who had the courage to dream and the magnitude of his aspirations always made people sit up and pay attention.

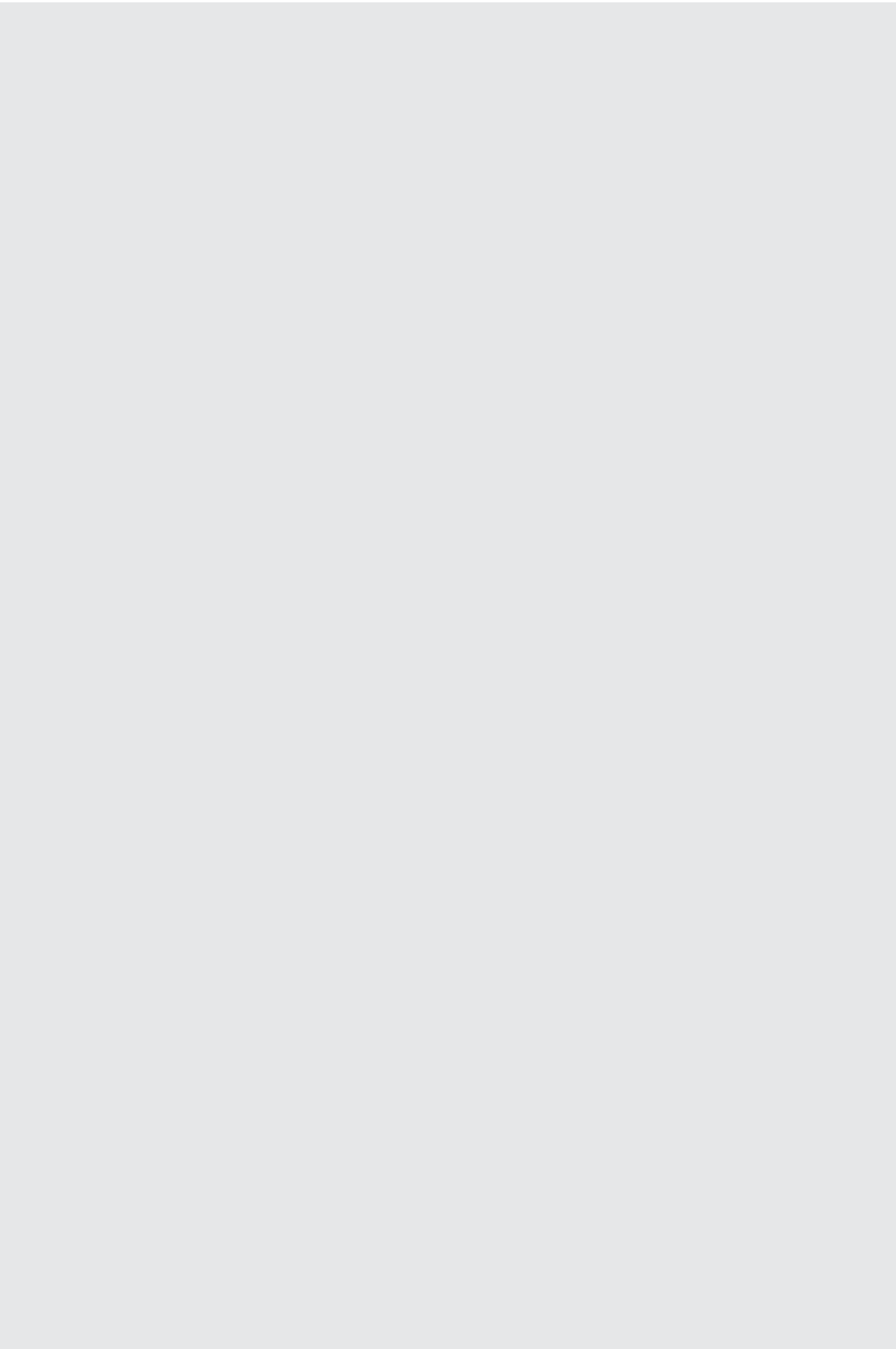
Compared to other cities in Malaysia that were characterized by organic growth, Putrajaya, on the other hand, was a well-planned city with tight construction schedules and strict deadlines. Its development took place in the late 1990s when the country was going through a phase of dire economic uncertainty, deepening recession, currency devaluation and deficits in Balance of Payments (BOP). Those challenges gave the perception that the development of Putrajaya was in for a slew of difficulties and obstacles, prompting certain quarters to suggest shelving or even cancelling the project completely. However, unknown to many, the government had, at its disposal, several viable options that could be called upon to finance the development of Putrajaya without having to place a burden on the country’s current accounts and reserves. The devastation felt by all Asian economies and financial sectors in actual fact presented Malaysia with a golden opportunity to put in place an entirely new public entity in its privatization policy called Malaysia Incorporated. In the implementation of Malaysia Incorporated, the government only assumes the role of facilitator that provides motivation to the parties involved and oversee each project at arm’s length through the implementation of strict regulations.



REDUCED GOVERNMENT ROLE

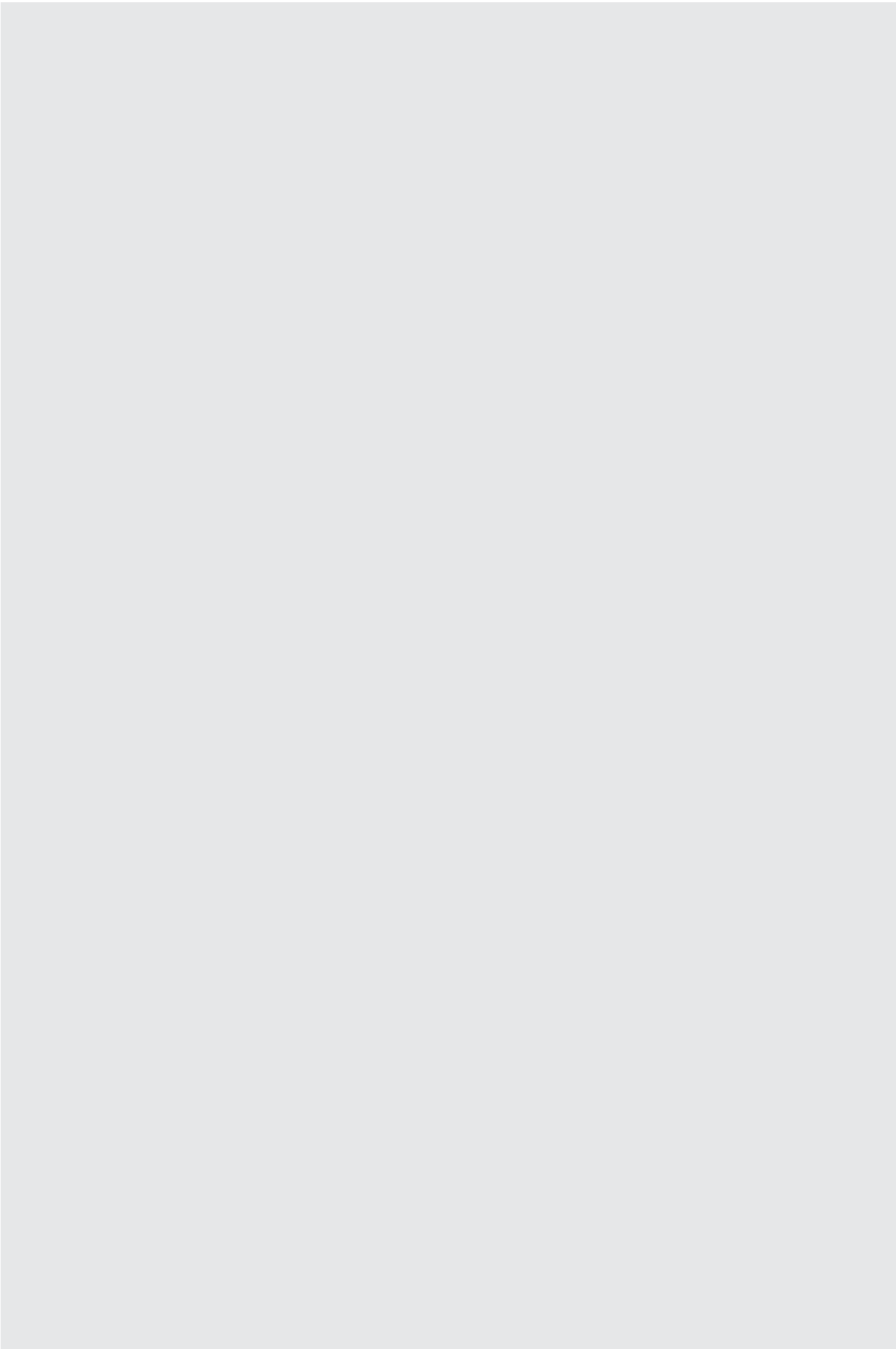
This novel approach signalled the Malaysian Government’s willingness to significantly scale down its direct influence over the economy, bring down the level and scope of public spending and at the same time allow the country’s economic activities to be governed solely by prevailing market forces. At the same time, the government was also fortunate in the sense that several mega privatization projects had already been successfully completed or were in the final stages of completion by the time the development of Putrajaya was ready to take off and that went a long way in helping to reduce the learning curve significantly.

The construction of the North-South Expressway and the challenges faced by United Engineers Malaysia throughout the duration proved to be an eye-opener for many while projects which were close to completion like the ultra-modern Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA Berhad) and the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (Petronas) also provided invaluable experience in handling projects of that magnitude. Conscious of the important and challenging tasks that lay ahead, the government established Putrajaya Holdings and made national oil company, Petronas one of its major shareholders, with a 40 percent equity stake. The decision to select Petronas was made only after the government was fully satisfied with the proposal submitted by Tun Azizan and Tan Sri Mohd Hassan Marican who were then Petronas President and Chief Executive Officer, respectively. Petronas’ exemplary management of KLCC development which was in its final stages of completion and its healthy balance sheet played a vital role in swaying the decision in their favour. The other two Putrajaya Holdings shareholders at that time were Khazanah Nasional Berhad with a 40 per cent equity stake and remainder was taken up by Kumpulan Wang Amanah Negara (National Trust Fund). On May 3, 2007 the ownership structure changed with Petronas via KLCC (Holdings) Sdn Bhd emerging as majority shareholder with a 64.41 percent stake while CIMB Group Nominees (Local) Sdn Bhd held the 20 percent stake for and on behalf of Kumpulan Wang Amanah Negara. Meanwhile, Khazanah Nasional Berhad’s portion shrank to 15.59 percent. As a privately held company, Putrajaya Holdings had two clear advantages. It had the freedom to raise funds from private capital and financial markets and, best of all, it was no longer bogged down by government bureaucracy. Decisions could be made speedily as only board approval was required.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

With that, Putrajaya Holdings went ahead to set up partnerships with established construction firms and used their financial clout and expertise to help develop Putrajaya. This tactical move resulted in the participation of well-known companies such as Kamunting Corporation Bhd, Peremba (M) Sdn Bhd, Hong Leong Properties Bhd, SP Setia Bhd, Lim Kong Sdn Bhd and Elder Setia Sdn Bhd in Putrajaya. The companies set up their own separate joint-venture equity partnership with Putrajaya Holdings and were asked to finance and start construction based on the masterplan and urban design guidelines drawn up by Perbadanan Putrajaya. Putrajaya Holdings, together with its joint-venture partners, picked up the bulk of the expenditure which was roughly RM21.4 billion out of the estimated RM24 billion-project. The remainder, which was a relatively smaller fraction, was taken up by the government to finance several selected infrastructure facilities. All those involved stood to gain handsomely from revenue acquired from the rental of government offices over the next 25 years as well as rental from the design-and-build government staff quarters and sale of commercial and residential properties. On hindsight, the decision to go ahead with the construction of Putrajaya proved to be a blessing in disguise as it kept all the involved companies in business while the rest of the construction industry came to a complete standstill during the Asian Financial Crisis.



FUNDRAISING EXERCISES

In the meantime, Putrajaya Holdings embarked on a fund raising exercise while waiting for revenue to be made available after the real estate was purchased and occupied. The task did not prove to be challenging at all as Putrajaya Holdings was fully backed by Petronas and Khazanah Nasional Berhad. Furthermore, the Malaysian Government provided guarantees for the leases up to a certain level. In its quest for financing, Putrajaya Holdings employed a combination of traditional and innovative fund-raising methods that ranged from shareholder loans and capital injections to joint-venture investments and the issuance of Islamic bonds.

The company, which has an authorised capital of RM3 billion, saw shareholder funds grow in tandem with progress in the project. The amount ballooned from RM30,000 at the time of incorporation in 1995 to RM2.2 billion in 1999. Furthermore, Khazanah Nasional Berhad, in its capacity as shareholder, gave the project a shot in the arm by providing term loans to kick-start construction. Unknown to many, Putrajaya Holdings and its partners’ ability to raise funds from the capital and financial markets also meant that the Putrajaya development was self-financing and did not require financial assistance from both Petronas and the government. Regular news coverage about Putrajaya Holdings’ participation in financial markets and repeated successful attempts in raising funds removed all doubts about the company from the eyes of the public and helped to reinforce the fact that financing deals related to the development of Putrajaya was done in a very prudent and calculated manner.



07. A Living Landscape



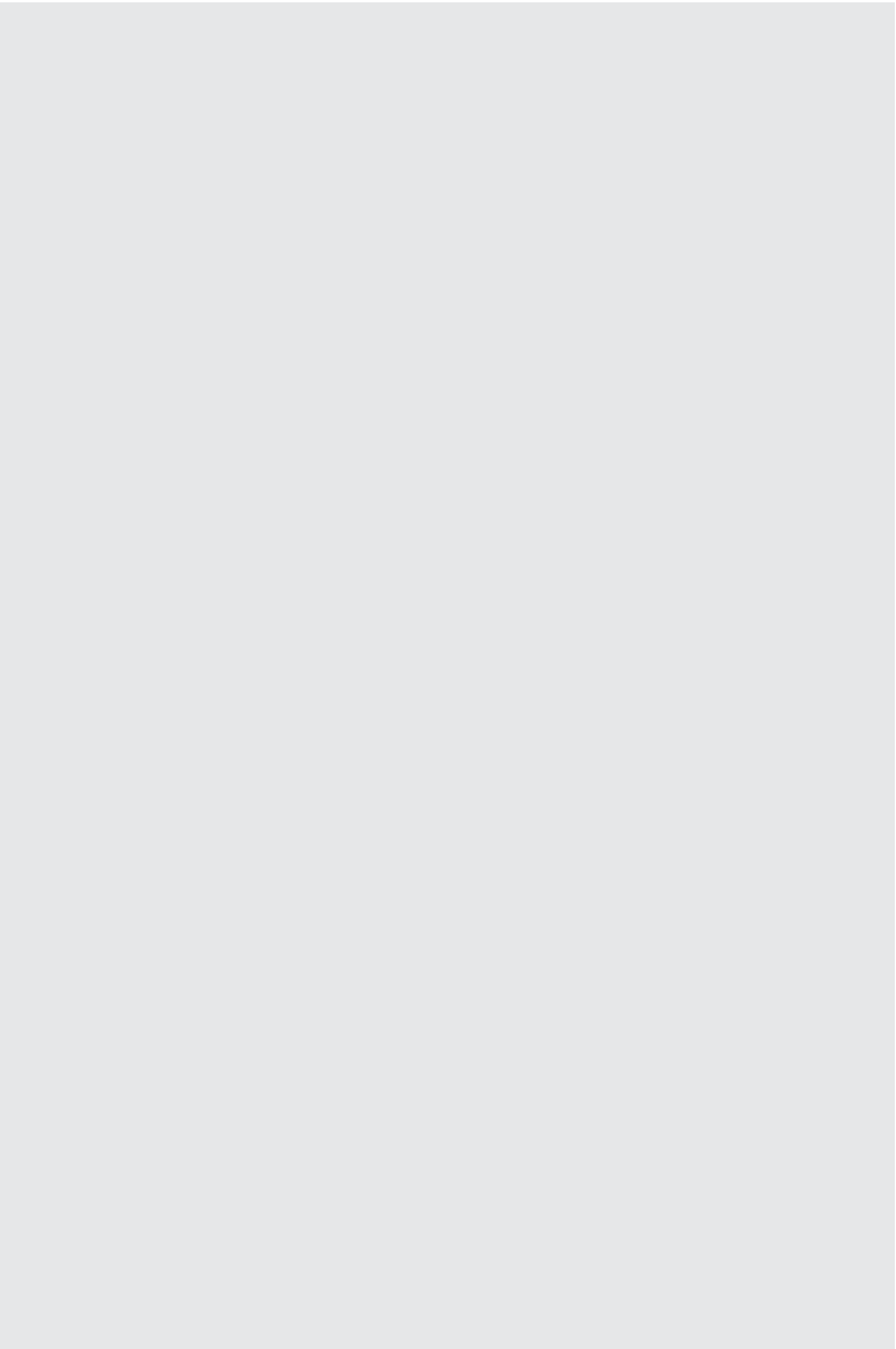
CREATING NATURAL CONNECTIONS

Building a mega city from scratch, right in the middle of nowhere is already a tall order for many. What makes it even more challenging is that vision provides for a garden city where stunning, aesthetically-designed buildings stand amidst lush greenery and crystal clear water bodies. The transform of the city into a park, just as it was stated in the Putrajaya development concept, involved more than just the usual textbook prerequisites like park construction, lakeside promenade decoration, wayside tree planting practices or simple architectural landscaping in the open spaces. From the start, Putrajaya was never meant to be just any run-of-the-mill type of city. It envisioned as a city that pushes creativity to the limit while having its own unique concept and ideas on achieving the dream of becoming a garden city.

Most pertinent above all, however, is the creation of a living landscape and this required planners, designers, developers and contractors to consciously look at the development in terms of conservation and come up with workable solutions to optimally manage the land and get the best out of it for the wildlife, people and, on the whole, the economy.

Traditionally, nature conservation in Malaysia has focussed its eyes predominantly on protecting specific sites, especially nature reserves. However, as demand for agricultural land, housing space and other forms of development have increased many folds over the last decade, wildlife and the natural ecosystem that they live in have paid the ultimate price by being edged out time and time again.

As natural habitats lose out at an unprecedented scale, the population sizes of both common and rare species that are endemic to our locale have also gone on a persistent decline as food sources and breeding spaces become exceedingly difficult to come by. Ultimately, it is up to forward-thinking decision makers to make wise choices and avert ecological disasters as in the case of Putrajaya.



OWN UNIQUE PATH

The desire to develop this balanced living landscape was embodied in the words of Tun Dr Mahathir himself who wanted the city to be developed along its own unique path and not to be copied from elsewhere. Since its inception, the Prime Minister had emphasised repeatedly regarding the preservation of Putrajaya’s original topographical form and for the city to be landscaped according to the natural shape of the land and not the other way around. While expressing his initial views on the development of Putrajaya, the Prime Minister questioned the need for housing developers to initiate massive ground levelling work each time they started on a residential project. Tun Dr Mahathir was of the view that the undulating landscape with its interesting collection of hillocks and valleys, apart from providing an effective natural drainage system, was also more stunning compared to flat land in terms of beauty. These factors, according to the maverick Putrajaya visionary, would help lower construction costs and increase the value of the real estate when completed. Since then, Putrajaya has been developed in line with this thinking where levelling has been kept to a bare necessity and the preservation of natural water run off given top priority. In order to ensure the success of this novel concept, Perbadanan Putrajaya has showed great leadership by personally taking on the key landscape architect role, an act never undertaken before by anyone in the construction field before then.

A policy was established to incorporate natural landscaping throughout the entire planning, design and implementation process. While reiterating on this, Tun Azizan said: “We have, by this landmark decision, given landscape architecture the centre stage.” With that concept in mind, stunning natural landscapes and lush gardens began making their presence felt in the city with the assistance of top talents in this field. Among those chosen to perform this task was Datuk Shahoran Johan Ariffin, a city planner and landscape architect. Along with city planner Datuk Jebasingam Issace John and land matters expert Datuk Muhamad Haitamin Ishak, they formed the team to spear head the planning and development of Putrajaya.



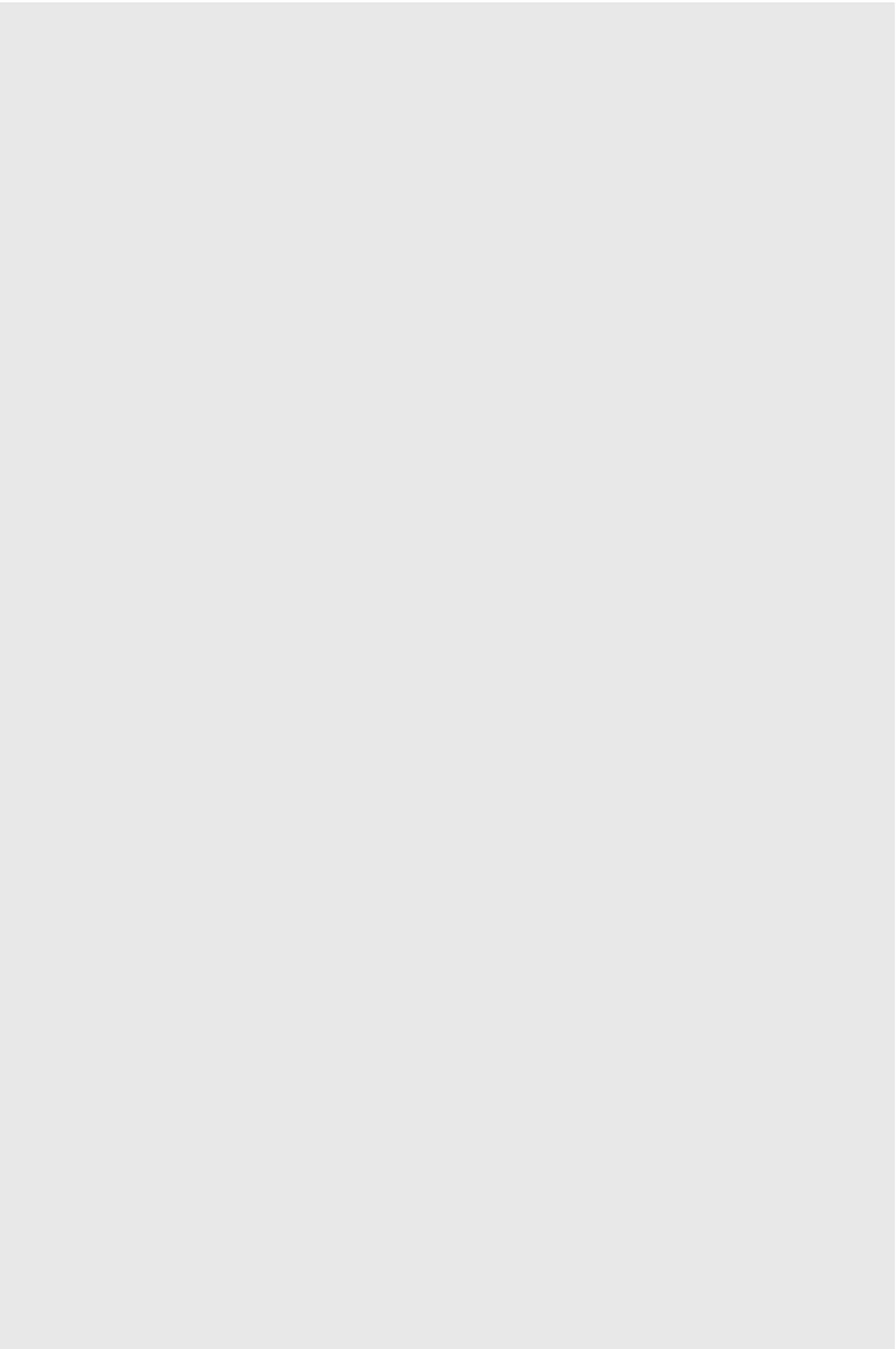
PERSONAL TOUCH

Throughout the development of the Putrajaya landscape, Tun Dr Mahathir, despite his busy schedule, always spared time to provide invaluable input towards the realisation of the city within the garden concept. He was active not only in terms of dispensing helpful insights, constructive criticisms but also in helping to select flora species that were considered suitable for Putrajaya. A former cabinet minister once told about an incident that happened during a ministerial cabinet meeting where Tun Dr Mahathir surprised everyone present by passing plant seedlings around the table and declared that the species was among those shortlisted for Putrajaya. The Prime Minister then went on to regale his colleagues with a wealth of information about the plants while supporting his choice with a variety of interesting facts. In another instance, an official from the Prime Minister's Department related an occasion that clearly demonstrated Tun Dr Mahathir's constant vigilance over the trees planted in Putrajaya. On that particular day, the Prime Minister walked into the meeting room, mentioned sight of a dead tree while on his way to office and expressed desire for a replacement, without detailing the exact location. As a result, the officer who was assigned to fulfil the task had no other alternative but to mindfully retrace the Prime Minister's route before he eventually triumphed in his endeavour.



THE GREEN APPROACH

To date, almost 40 percent of the green areas throughout Putrajaya have been developed with the construction of 12 metropolitan parks, 38 kilometers of the Putrajaya Promenade as well as a series of protocol streets and a vast network of landscaped areas within residential neighbourhoods, office complexes and the city centre by using various concepts, themes and characters for each unique domain. With its given priority, landscaping work was always scheduled and planned in such a way to ensure that public areas and metropolitan parks provided as much comfort as possible to visitors and tourists. As a case in point, no less than 20 million plants and trees have been planted in Putrajaya to provide shade and improve the overall attractiveness of the city. Perbadanan Putrajaya took such a serious view towards the preservation of local flora that beginning from 2017 a strict policy regarding the removal and disposal of existing trees within its jurisdiction was established. Aimed at the prevention of shade and greenery loss, the ruling imposed a compensation and replacement ratio of two identical plants for each one that was removed. This step, which is just one among many, went a long way towards fulfilling Putrajaya's aspirations as a city in a garden and is line with the vision of the Putrajaya Structure Plan 2025 which aims to turn Putrajaya into a sustainable city within the next five years while keeping its aesthetic values intact.



PARKS & GARDENS

Parks and gardens feature prominently in Putrajaya and, thanks to thoughtful foresight and planning, these places of calm and relaxation are found within walking distance from most precincts in the city. The parks in Putrajaya are be divided into metropolitan parks, urban parks and city pocket parks. Metropolitan parks predominantly consist of the existing vegetated ridges and hills that have been preserved to provide the largest tracts of open space. They form the main “green lungs” within the landscape framework of Putrajaya. Activities and amenities within the metropolitan parks are predominantly passive and low impact related to the natural environment such as arboretum, aviaries, hiking, walking and nature trails, adventure play grounds and environmental art. These parks include Taman Wetland (Wetlands Park), Taman Putra Perdana, Taman Botani (Botanical Garden), Taman Wawasan, Taman Warisan Pertanian, Taman Cabaran, Taman Rimba Alam, Taman Saujana Hijau, Taman Rimba Desa, Taman Pancarona, Taman Puncak Puteri and Taman Selatan. The Wetlands Park, believed to be the largest constructed freshwater wetlands in the tropics, was officially opened by Tun Dr Mahathir on February 2, 2001. Meanwhile, the Botanical Garden, which was opened on February 4, 2003, was conferred as one of Asia’s Most Amazing Garden by the Royal Chelsea Foundation, London at the World Premier Royal Chelsea Flower Show in 2008.

Urban parks are medium sized open spaces, which have a well-defined shape in relation to the urban setting and generally form bridging or connecting spaces along and between the metropolitan parks and Putrajaya Lake Waterfront. They are more active in nature providing amenities that are determined by the land use in the surrounding areas. City pocket parks are the smallest in the hierarchy of public open spaces and they are essentially resting places and meeting points formed and contained by the built city fabric.



WATER BODY IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

The stunning attractions of Putrajaya’s green areas are further enhanced by the creation of the water bodies ie; the Putrajaya lake and the wetland areas, which are now among the key features of the city. While the wetland areas cater primarily to nature lovers, Putrajaya lake takes on a more comprehensive role by functioning as a recreational area.as well as serving as temperature-modifying system.

Right from the onset, it was acknowledged that there was a need for lakes and wetlands in Putrajaya. The 200 hectare wetlands, which straddles the water courses of Sungai Chuau, Sungai Bisa and three other small tributaries, functions as a natural filtration system which cleanses the surface run-off from the catchment area and ensures that the water quality is up to mark before it flows into the lake, The water is clean and clear, classified as Class II according to the Department of Environment’s water quality index, which allows for water body contact activities. To achieve this the wetlands were planted with many species of aquatic plants that were able to treat and act as a natural filtration system to remove nutrients and pollutants from the run-off. In addition, the wetlands also helps in flood mitigation, nature conservation, ecotourism, recreation, research and acts as a protection against soil erosion.

Meanwhile, the 400 hectare man-made lake, located at the southern part of the wetland, was designed and planned for various recreational usage including water sports, angling as well as a tourist attraction. The lake came into being when the two existing streams, Sungai Chuau and Sungai Bisa, were flooded over and obturated to create the scenic water body. The lake and its foreshores also form Putrajaya’s most popular resource for informal recreation as a waterfront city.

The lake and wetlands were built using the ecohydrology concept that places emphasis on interactions between ecological systems and the hydrological cycle. This technological approach is recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as one of the innovative methods to treat surface water run-off from cities.

The successful application of this ecohydrology concept using the existing wetland and lake in Putrajaya ensures sustainability by bringing nature back into the urban surroundings and thus benefitting the community, as a whole. At the same time, the wetland acts as a breeding ground, nursery and home to numerous flora and fauna. Similarly, the lake, with its balanced ecosystem, is also self-sustaining.

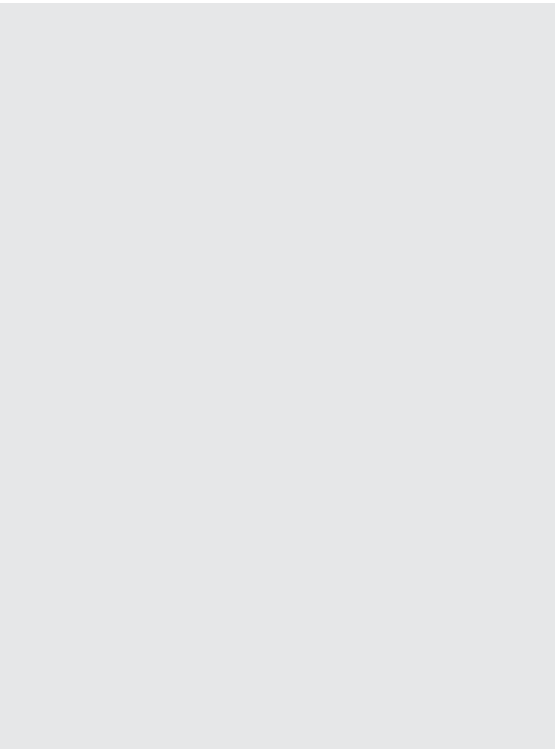
Today, the lake and wetlands have become reference points for students, researchers, scientists and decision makers from many nations in their capacity as one of the best-managed freshwater ecosystems in the world.



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ARCHITECTURAL MARVEL

The list is endless when it comes to buildings that deserve special mention in Putrajaya. This comes as no surprise as the city is an epicentre of magnificent architectural buildings that tower majestically over the lush canopy of surrounding trees. As early as 2001, the local media began providing coverage related to this matter. The nation’s longest running English daily, The New Straits Times was among the first to create public interest by writing: “Putrajaya is not a series of concrete boxes designed for boring bureaucrats. It is, quite clearly, a remarkable architectural achievement.” Positive announcements such as this resulted in an almost instantaneous public interest and brought throngs of curious visitors to Putrajaya’s doorstep overnight. Everyone was eager to see what the new government administrative centre had to offer. Among the first few buildings that come in to view upon reaching Precinct 2 via the Perdana Boulevard is the 12-storey uniquely semi-circular shaped building which is home to the Ministry of Finance.

The next structure is the majestic Perdana Putra Complex which overlooks the Putrajaya Lake, Putra Mosque and Dataran Putra. Looking at the building’s design which incorporates elements of Islamic-Mogul architecture, with a green-pitched roof that converges at the onion-shaped glazed mosaic main dome, it is easy to understand why it is popular with the shutterbugs.

Furthermore, the six-storey natural stone clad office complex is the place where the Prime Minister’s office, the offices of the Deputy Prime Minister and Chief Secretary to the Government call home. During an interview for this book, former Chief Secretary to the Government Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid revealed that the idea for the onion-shaped dome came from Tun Dr Mahathir himself when the building was in the planning stages.

Closer to the scenic Putrajaya Lake is the Putra Mosque which is arguably the city’s most distinctive landmark and one of the most modern mosques in the world. A showcase of how mosque designs have evolved in Malaysia, Putra Mosque’s Islamic architecture artistically blends traditional designs, local craftsmanship and the use of indigenous materials. Next is the Diamond Building which is named because of its unique shape. This building serves as the headquarters of the Energy Commission. Another building that is also the pride of Putrajaya is Istana Melawati. Its unique architecture and non-evasive construction give an interesting illusion of a building that hugs

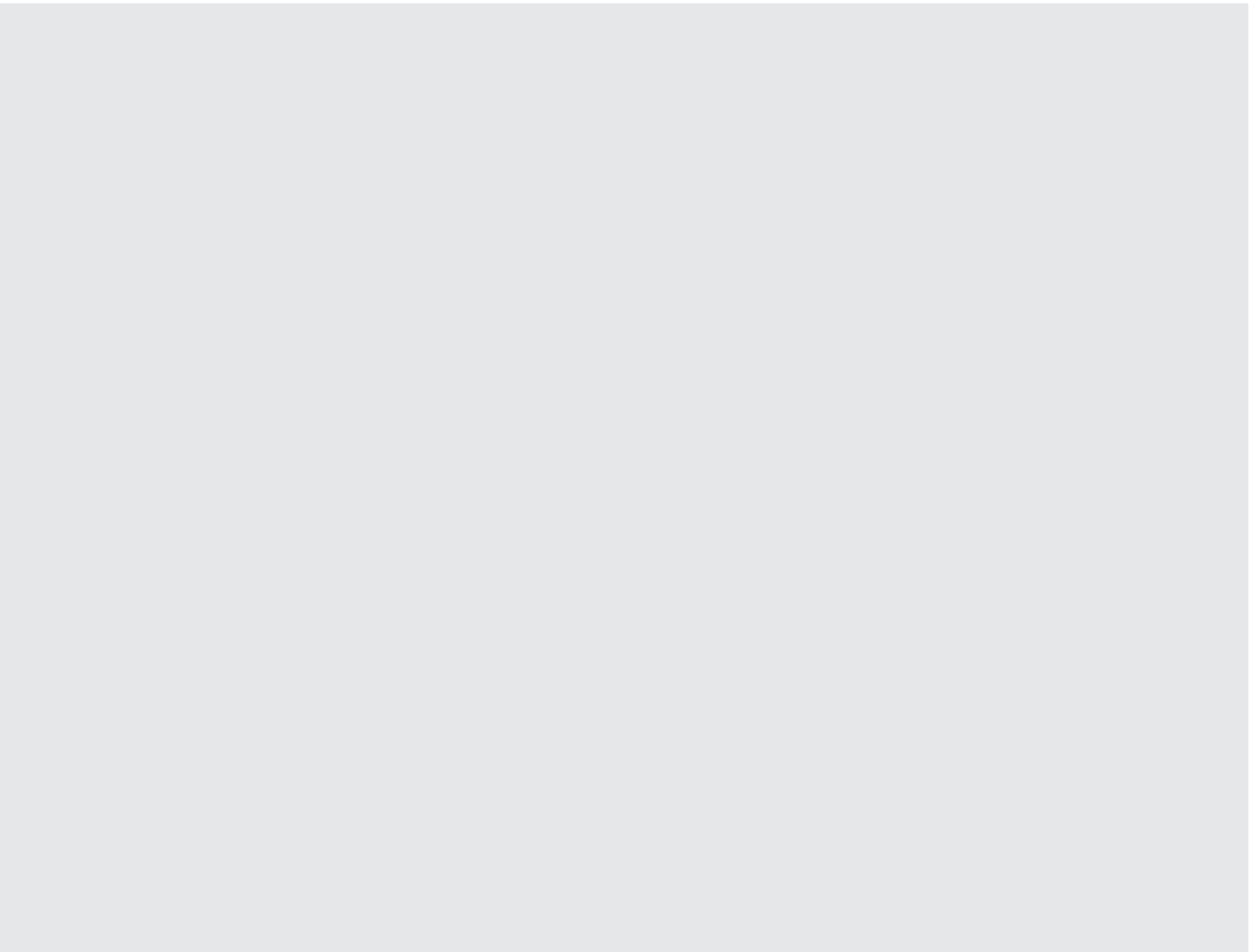
the natural landscape while gently cascading down the hill slope. Not to be missed is the tiered levels of its square-based pyramidal roof which projects a very distinctive and eye-catching style when viewed in totality with the surrounding open-sided verandas.

Moving on to Precinct 3, the Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin Mosque, also known as the Iron Mosque, is a popular stop over for visitors. Construction on this religious building, considered the second principal mosque in Putrajaya, began since April 2004 and was fully completed a little more than five years later, in August 2009. Located in between Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin Mosque and Istana Kehakiman (Palace of Justice) is the iconic Perbadanan Putrajaya complex which boasts a modern architectural design befitting its occupant, the city authority that administers the Federal Territory of Putrajaya. Istana Kehakiman is an expansive complex comprises of a five-storey building for the judiciary and a two-storey annexe that houses the courts and offices. Its classical design gives depths to the building skin and creates interesting articulated facade. Collectively, these imposing buildings provide stunning visual effects for outdoor photographers.

Located on a 2.09 hectare site in Precinct 14 is the RM60 million Nasyrul Al-Quran Complex which is said to be the world largest Quran production centre after Madinah. This center is capable of printing at least one million copies of Quran annually, where 70 per cent is for the local market while another 30 percent is for wakaf (endowment) for Muslim minorities in other countries.

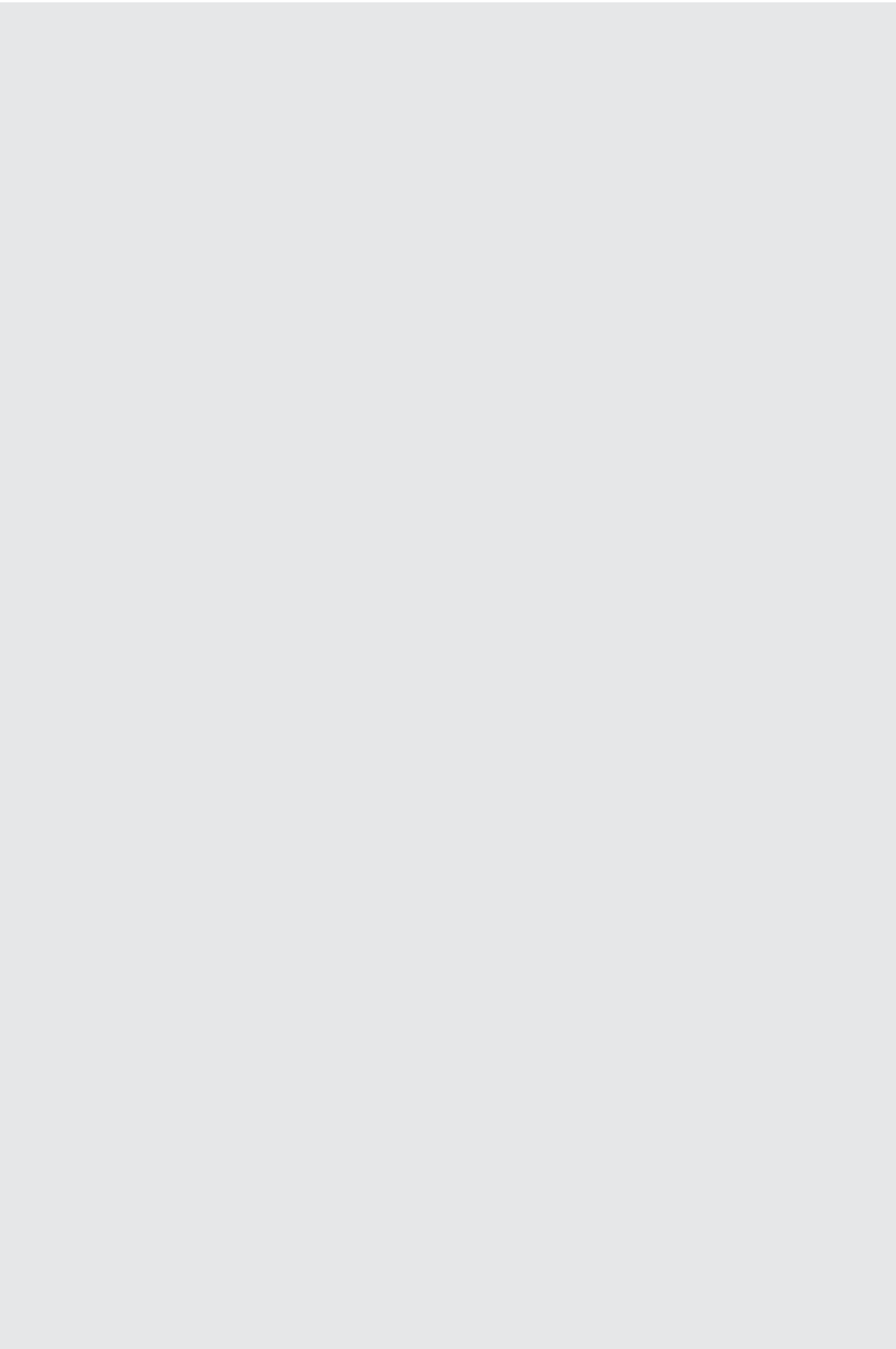
Looking back at the historical record, documents kept in the Architectural and Building Inspectorate Department revealed that the first building approval application issued by Perbadanan Putrajaya was “Cadangan Pembangunan 362 Unit Rumah Teres “Garden Terraces” di Presint 9 Fasa I, di atas sebahagian H.S (D) 3605, P.T No. 9495, Putrajaya. Zone B – 85 Unit (Lot PT 178-P.T 262), 46 Unit (Lot PT 364 – PT 409)” on October 15, 1997 (Proposed Development of 362 units of terrace homes at Precinct 9.)

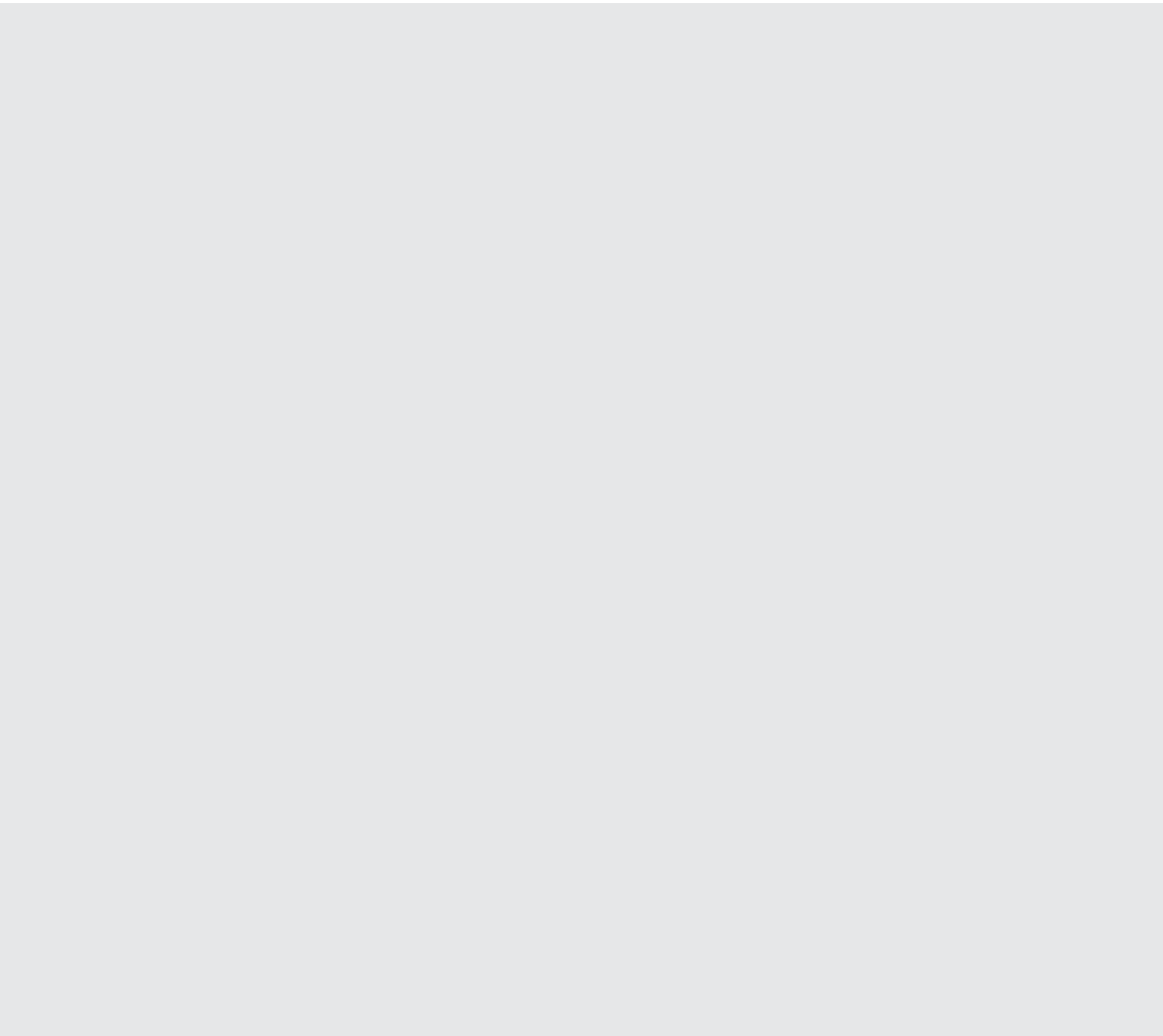
The first Certificate of Occupancy issued by Perbadanan Putrajaya was “Cadangan Membina Sebuah Rumah Dua Tingkat Kediaman Rasmi Perdana Menteri Malaysia Di Atas Lot PT 2305 Presint 10, Putrajaya” to Arca3 Architects on October 28, 1999 (Proposed Construction of a Two-Storey House Official Residence of the Prime Minister of Malaysia).



PUTRAJAYA BOULEVARD

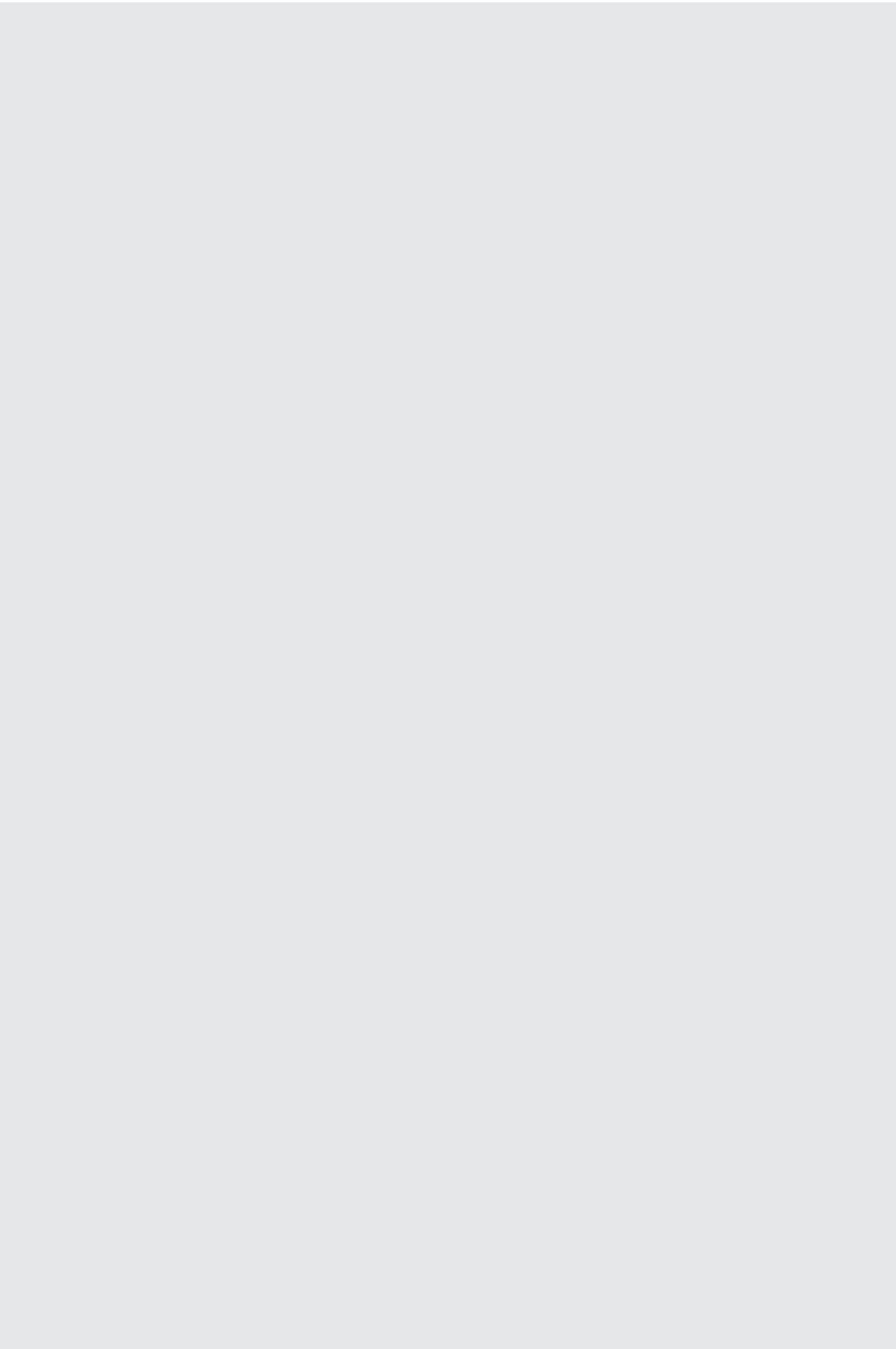
Cutting through the administrative buildings of Precincts 2 to 4, with Dataran Putra at one end and the Putrajaya International Convention Centre at the other, is the distinguish 4.2-kilometre Putrajaya Boulevard which forms the central spine linking the five core precincts of Putrajaya. Designed for ceremonial parades such as the Merdeka Day celebration, it is punctuated by five major datarans or squares, distinctive nodes and gathering points for the people. While generally formal for its entire length, the spirit and character of the Boulevard undergoes a perceptible change from formal in the north to less formal in the south. While the northern portion is hard paved for parades and march-past, the southern stretch has a linear park with both passive and active recreation facilities in the central media.

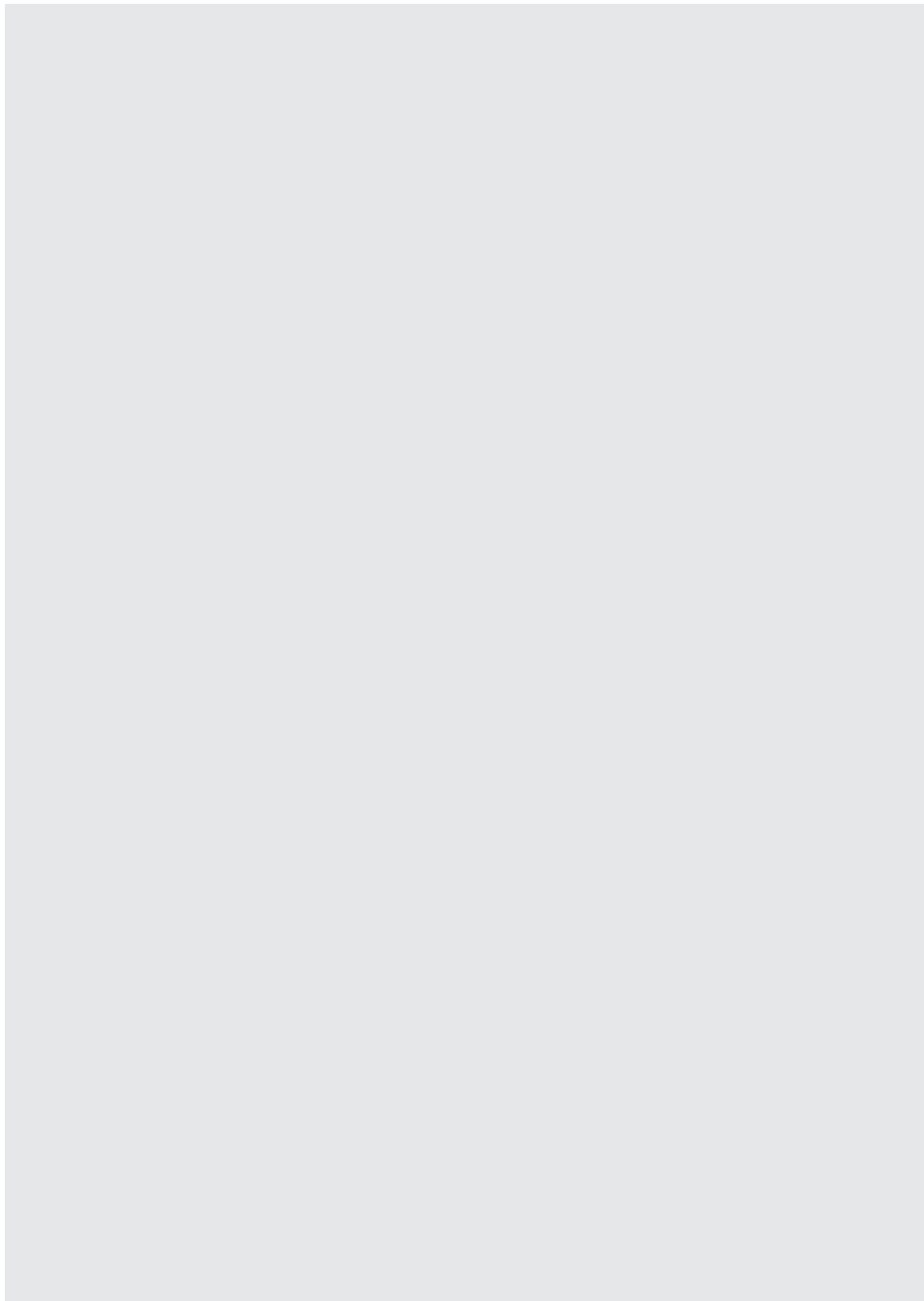




DATARAN PUTRA

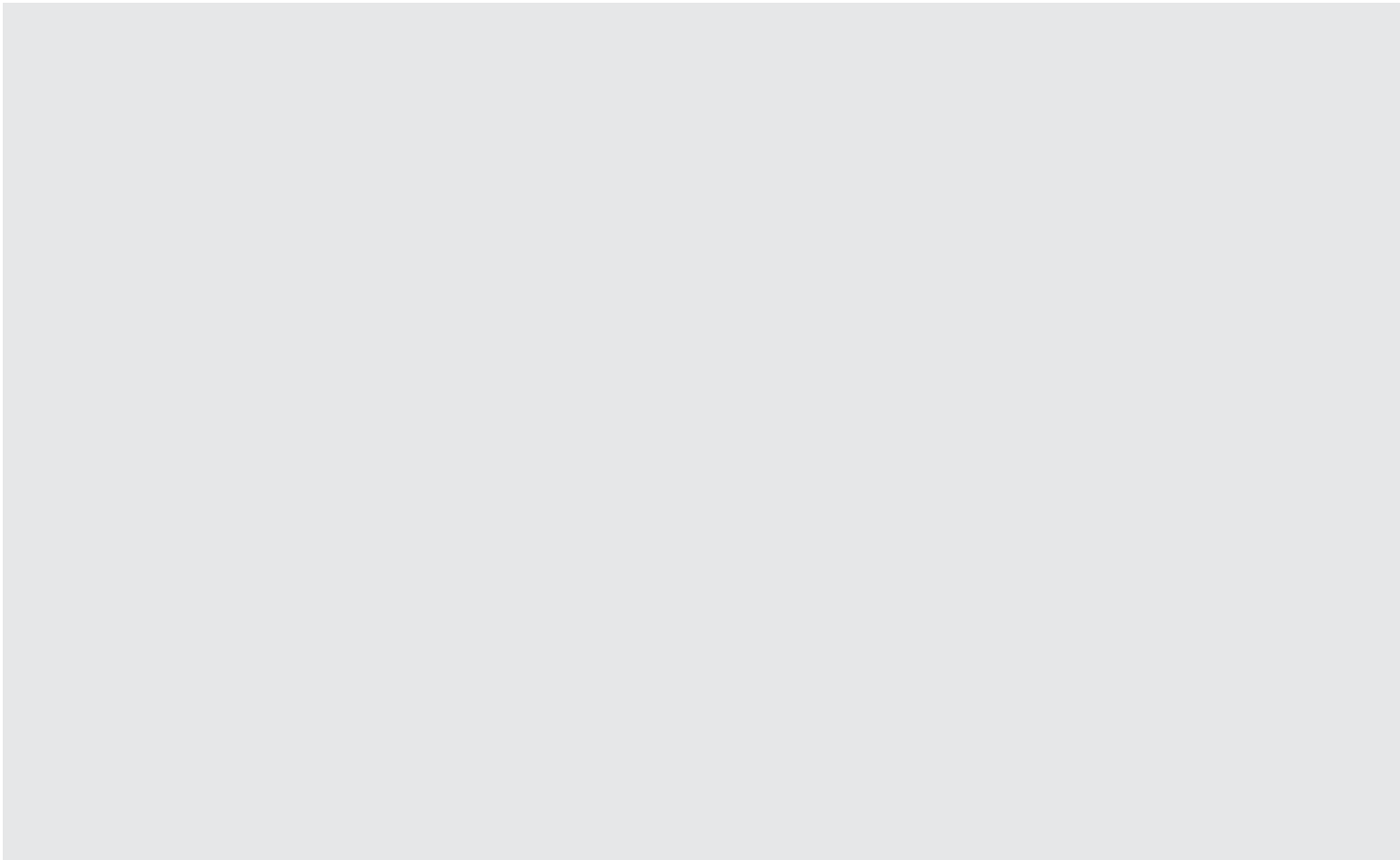
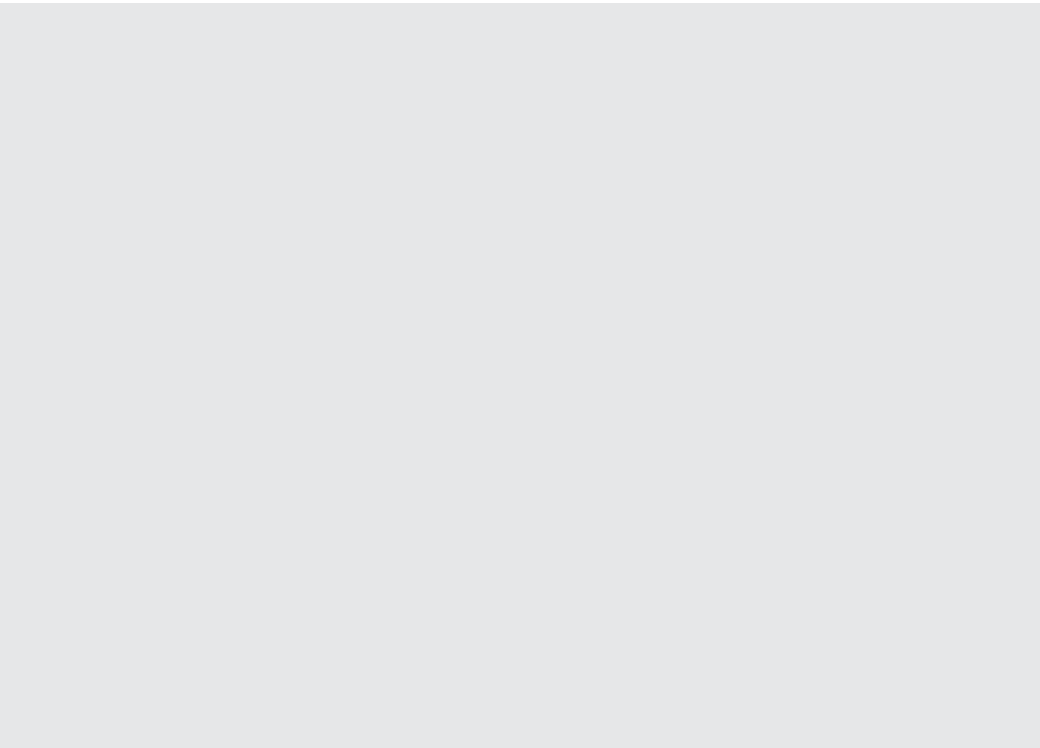
Nearby is the 300 meter circular Dataran Putra (Putra Square) which is bounded by Perdana Putra, Putra Mosque, Putra Bridge and the Promenade Shopping Mall. Its design incorporates an outer 11-pointed star representing the original eleven states that formed the Federation of Malaya when the nation first gained independence in 1957, an inner 13-pointed star symbolizing the thirteen states that made up an enlarged Malaysia in 1965 while the inner-most 14-pointed star shows the inclusion of the unified Federal Territories of Kuala Lumpur, Labuan and Putrajaya as part of Malaysia today.





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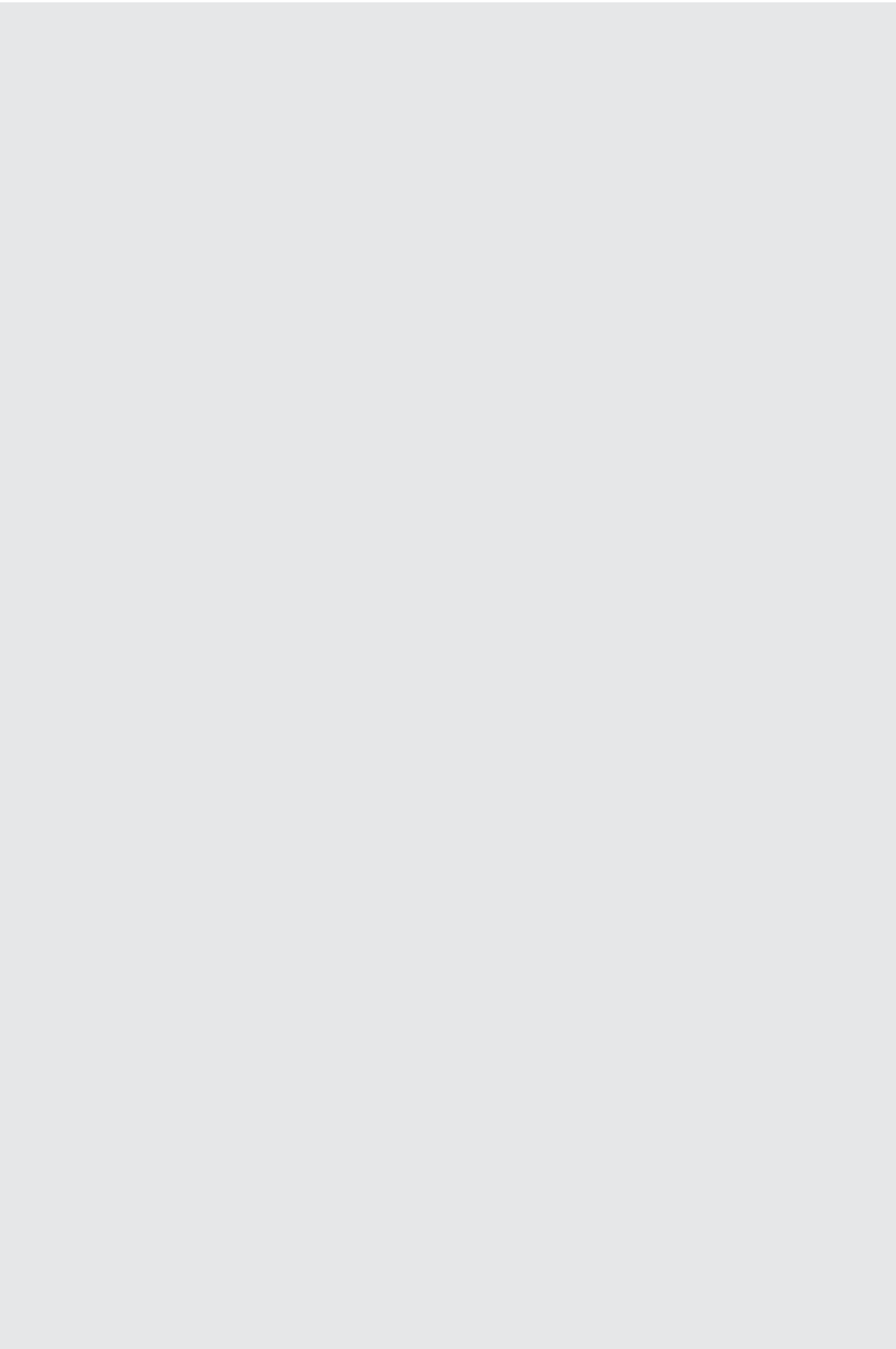
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BRIDGES

Putrajaya is probably the only city in the country that is synonymous with bridge tourism. Over the years, the nine iconic bridges, each having its own unique aesthetic design, have become scenic spots that attract tourists and photographers. The bridges of Putrajaya, most of them built before water was allowed to flow into the lake, represent human creativity and is a summary of the three main types of bridges built since ancient times – beam, arch, and suspension – and later variations such as cable-stayed, truss and cantilever. Putrajaya bridges not only serve as a connecting link between the various precincts but reflected the city is a symbol of Malaysia's dynamism and progress with its fresh and modern outlook. The more stunning ones are Putra Bridge, Seri Wawasan Bridge, Seri Saujana Bridge and Seri Gemilang Bridge where visitors usually make it as a photography spot.



PUTRAJAYA GATEWAY AND STREETScape

The Putrajaya Gateway project was one the most challenging feat undertaken by the Landscape Division of the City Planning Department at Perbadanan Putrajaya. Tun Azizan wanted the Putrajaya Gateway to be an experiential gateway that is simple yet elegant instead of the normal gateway statements that normally graced Malaysian cities with huge signages and arch structures. The Landscape Division worked with Putrajaya Holdings and nine landscape architects over a period of over five years to come up with families of street lightings and furniture from 1999 to 2004. This is to provide the city with unique custom designed street light poles, street furniture and land bridges over highways, in addition to designing the ground platform levels of highway approach from Kuala Lumpur International Airport into the city to have a commanding view of the city's skyline interspersed with greenery overlooking the Putrajaya Lake. For street lightings, the fauna, flora, obor (torch) and wau (Malay kite) concepts were used for the protocol roads, baba nyonya heritage concept for the core island, heron concept for the Boulevard and tepak sireh concept (betel nut container) for precinct 2.

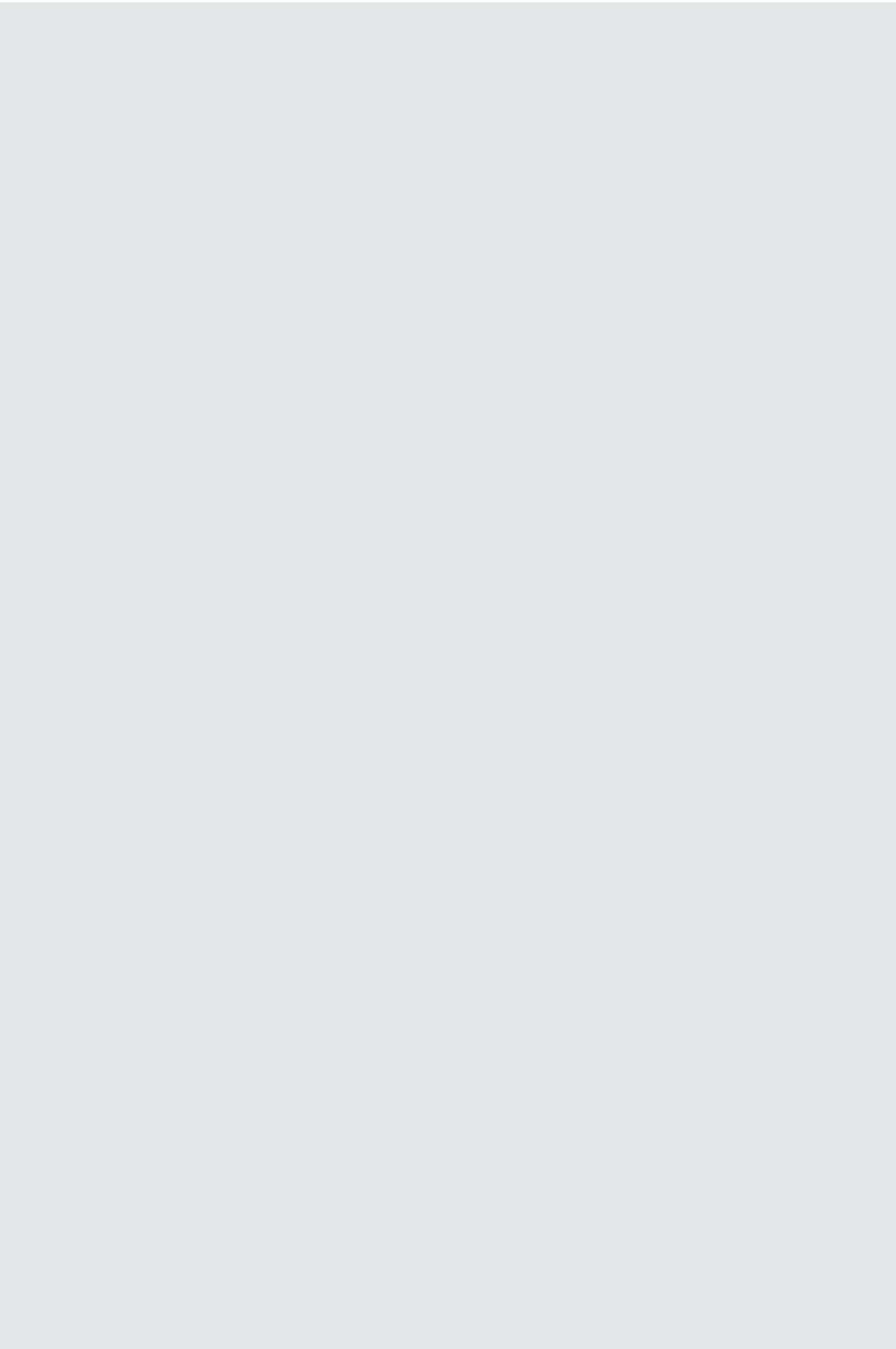
The streetscape environment is an important and integral part of the open space hierarchy and pedestrian network. In Putrajaya the streets have consciously been designed with broad shoulders for segregated footpaths and cycle-ways and there is ample provision to allow extensive structure, avenue and shrub planting.

With its progress reaching the significant quarter century milestone, Putrajaya has proven to all that it has not only evolved into a destination to visit and see stunning landscapes and landmarks but has also successfully set a benchmark for developments of its kind to follow and thrive while drawing strength to face challenges of the future.



08. A Place to Live



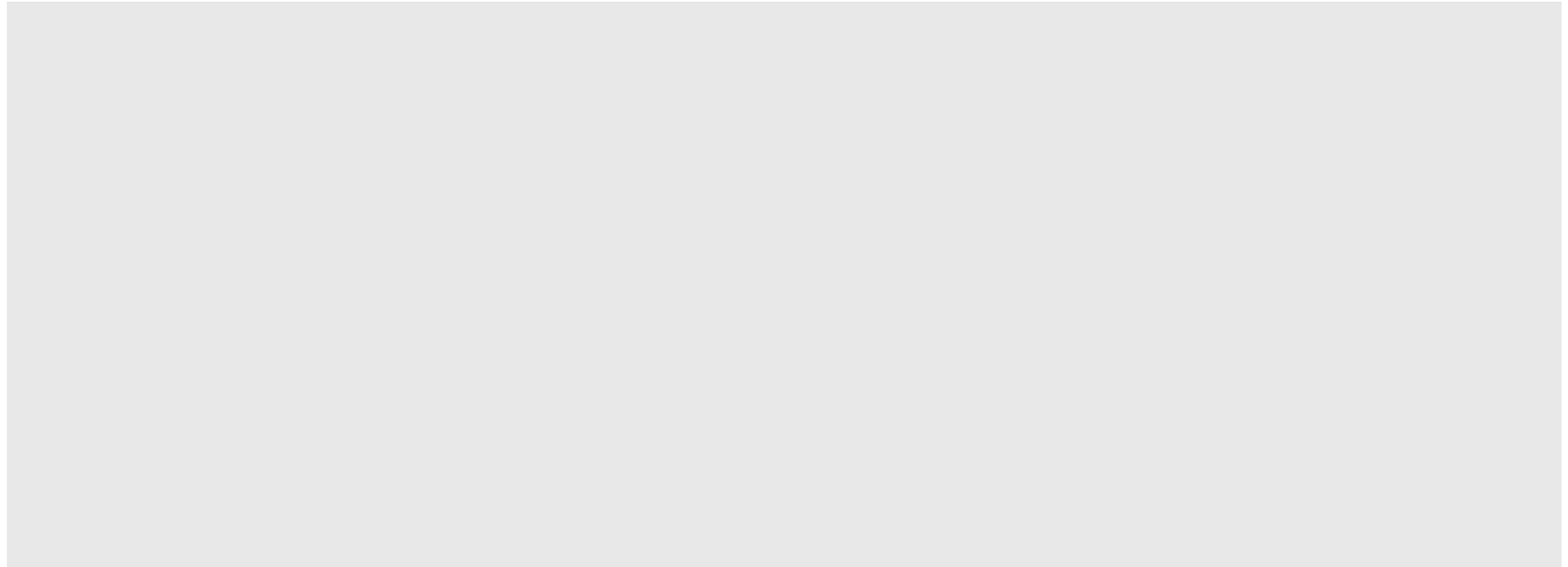


HOME TO EVERYONE

Within the space of one week Putrajaya Holdings established itself in three important matters concerning its role in providing for and building residential homes in the city. Firstly to generate awareness, Putrajaya Holdings hosted a media preview on March 24, 1998 about Putrajaya's development status in terms of residential development, at which for the first time, it shared information about the homes to be built in the city. Secondly, on March 26, 1998 Putrajaya Holdings signed a memorandum of understanding with seven financial institutions for end-financing facilities for residential development in Putrajaya. Finally, two days later on March 28, 1998, it launched sales for the city's first phase of residential units. They needed to move quickly because they required the construction of the homes to be finalized at the same time as the office buildings, also under construction. This was important because when civil servants began to move into their offices in Putrajaya, their homes and quarters would be occupied as well.

The first batch of residents moved into the city in 1999, comprising mainly government servant living in Precincts 8, 9, 10 and 16. The periphery (residential precincts) was planned based on the neighbourhood planning concept; within each neighbourhood, there was a variety of housing for a range of incomes, including bungalows, semi-detached homes, terrace houses, shophouses, and high-rise apartments. In the book Construction of Putrajaya The Developer's Perspective, Putrajaya Holdings explained, "Putrajaya Holdings and its joint-venture companies offer residents the benefit of choice: a choice of attractive, well-designed houses to suit a variety of budgets. House sizes took into account the national average of five persons per family to offer a minimum of three bedrooms. The design also took into consideration the humid tropical climate characterized by afternoon glare. Most houses have a north-south orientation, several windows, and an open-plan layout to cheery and well-ventilated home create an environment that uses the natural elements to best advantage." In Putrajaya, residential units sprawled across 14 out of the city's 20 precincts, from precincts 6 to 19 in the periphery, encircling the Core Area of government and commercial buildings. Putrajaya Holdings' target was to have 67,000 units ready -- 35,000 units or 52 percent for government employees and 32,000 units or 48 percent to be sold to private buyers. Residential land use constituted the second largest land use category in Putrajaya at 25.5 percent of the total area, covering a total of 1,169 hectares. This residential land is divided into 13 exclusive precincts in the periphery (1,097 hectares with 57,033 units), with some parcels within the Core area (71 hectares with 10,119 units).

There is also the choice of downtown living. On 62.5 hectares allocated on the Core Island, condominiums, townhouses and landed units are just a stone's throw away from office and commercial complexes. To meet the target of developing homes for all groups in Putrajaya, the need for middle income housing was emphasized in planning. On November 7, 1999 then Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdullah performed the ground-breaking ceremony for affordable houses in Precinct 9. Then, on August 15, 2000 the government signed an agreement with Putrajaya Holdings for the design and construction of quarters for civil servants.



LIVING A QUALITY LIFE

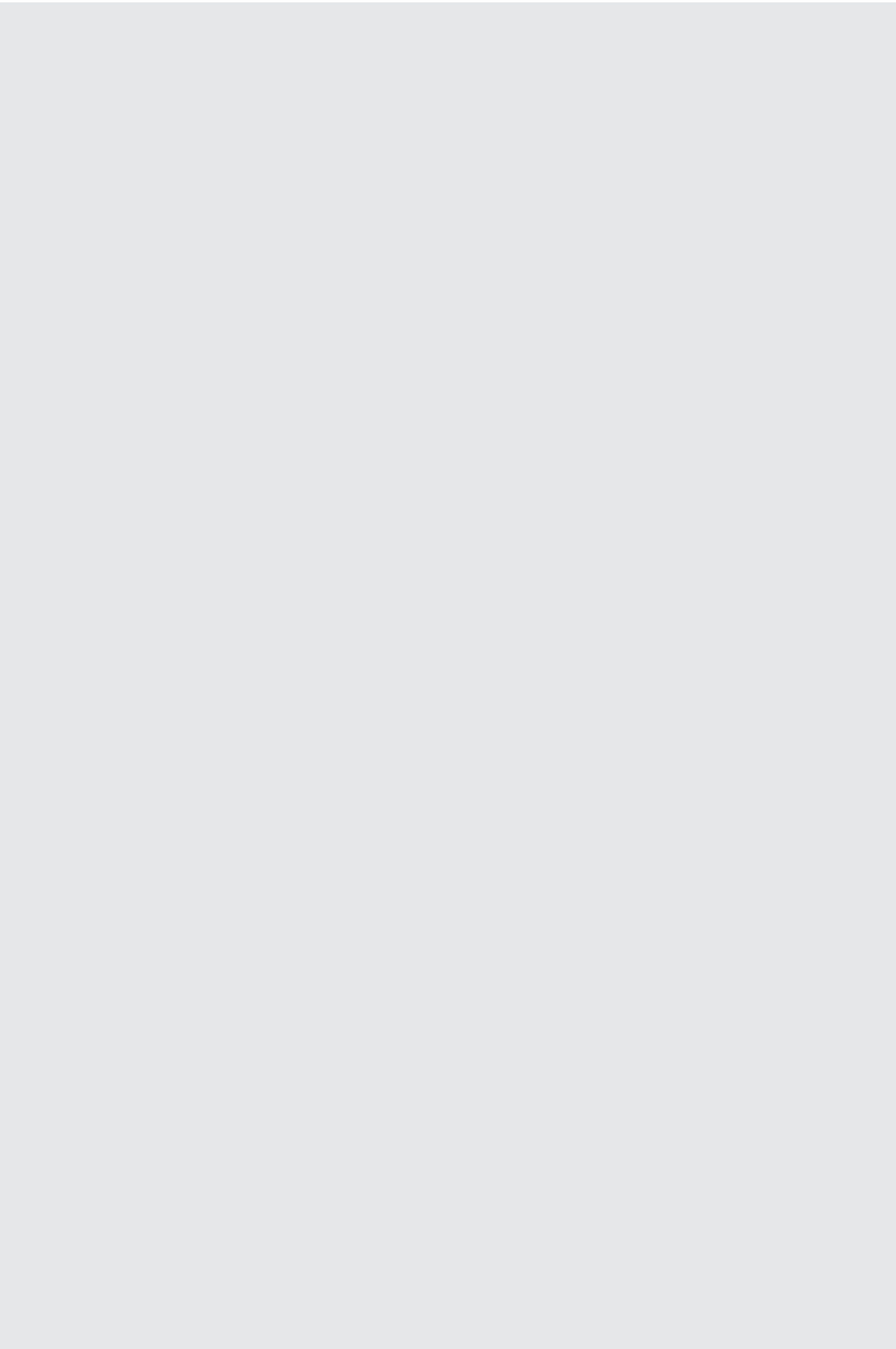
The residential precincts started off at a rather slow pace, as the public, and even some civil servants who were offered the option to rent the Government quarters, were apprehensive of moving there, in light of its perceived distance. However, after fast-forwarding two decades, the city's liveability improved tremendously. Modern infrastructure, including new highways, has reduced travelling time substantially, enhancing the attractiveness of Putrajaya. Additionally, as a result of careful planning and development, Putrajaya has become a more attractive and vibrant place to live, having become more self-sufficient and meeting a comprehensive list of basic needs and amenities. Living in Putrajaya not only means a nice home to go back to; it's the experience of a quality of life that nurtures oneself physically, mentally and spiritually. In order to foster a sense of community and belonging, adequate facilities in the neighborhood are always emphasized by Perbadanan Putrajaya.



SUSTAINABLE PUTRAJAYA 2025

Sustainable development practices have long been embedded in Putrajaya in line with its Garden City theme. Putrajaya’s planning and development concept based on these principles, which were incorporated in the Putrajaya Masterplan, have provided a solid foundation the city to build upon.

These practices are further reinforced in the Sustainable Putrajaya Development Principles 2025 (Sustainable Putrajaya 2025) which outlines the city’s vision, direction and policies to support its transformation from a city in a garden to a green city. By 2025, Putrajaya will be transformed into a Green City with marked improvements in various sustainable practices. The vision will be achieved by placing emphasis on reducing carbon footprints through preservation of green areas, wholesome healthy living, balanced usage of alternative energy, efficiency in waste management, usage of sustainable transportation modes as well as various other green initiatives. Sustainable Putrajaya 2025 is guided primarily by planning and development principles adopted from Vision 2020. The latter is a broad-based Malaysian ideal that encompasses all aspects of life, from economic prosperity, social well-being, world-class education, political stability, as well as psychological balance. As such, Sustainable Putrajaya 2025 will successfully strike a delicate balance between the city’s pursuit of economic development and the need for it to be environmentally sensitive as well as socially responsible.



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

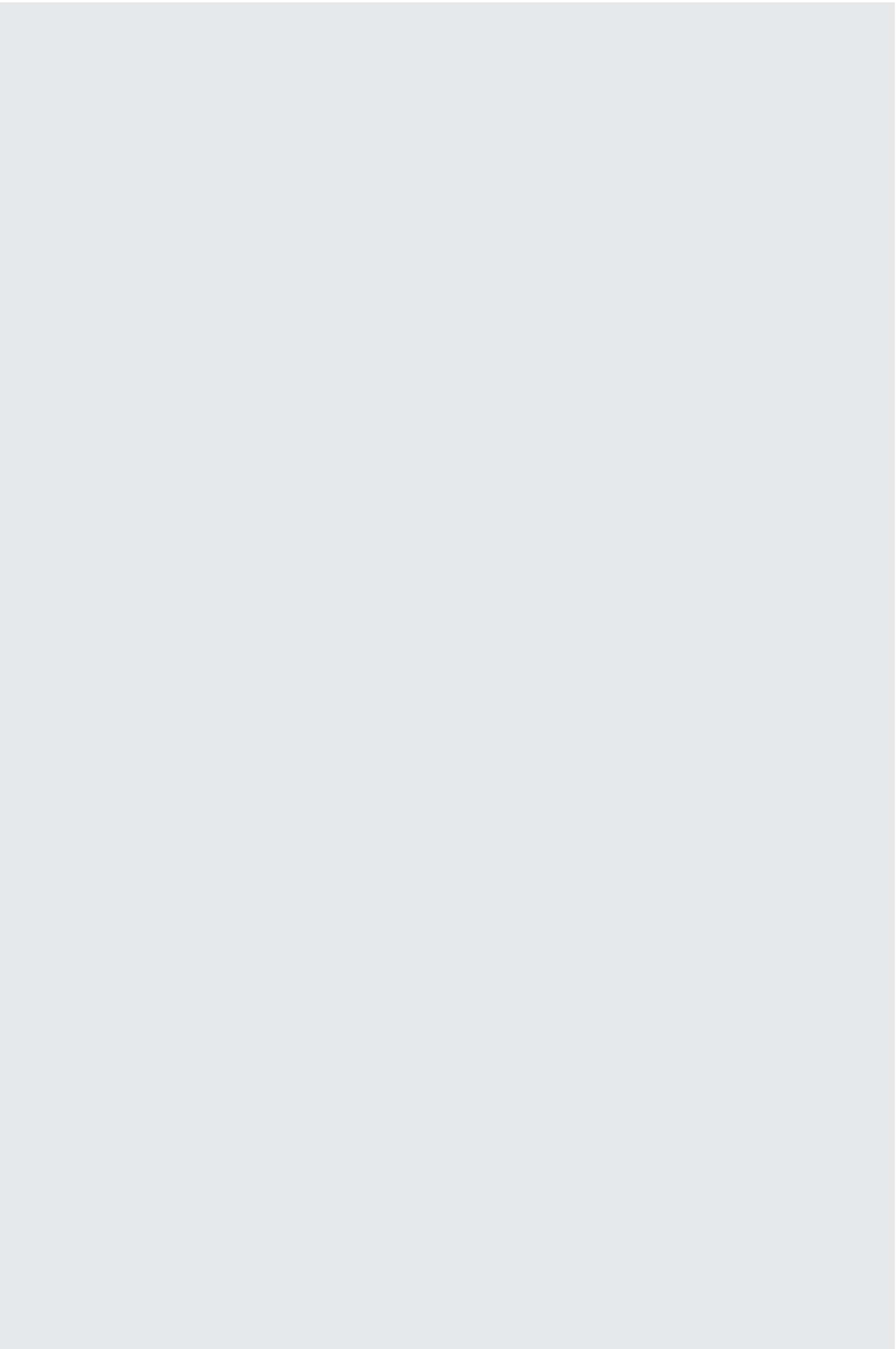
Perbadanan Putrajaya has implemented Local Agenda 21 Programs in the city to form a partnership as well as cohesiveness between the local authority and the community and private sector to plan and manage the environment towards achieving sustainable development. Agenda 21, a non-binding action plan of the United Nations with regard to sustainable development, is a product of the Earth Summit (UN Conference on Environment and Development) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. Perbadanan Putrajaya has also launched a blueprint for virtuous living which will engage residents from all walks of life. The action plan, which was drawn up with the help of researchers from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), is based on six core pillars – religion, service to society, education, economic well-being, good governance and well-planned infrastructure. Encompassing a period of four years starting from 2018, the Putrajaya community itself has been identified as the main catalyst for the successful implementation of the blueprint which will help to create a favourable living atmosphere so that residents would be able to live, work and play within a positive environment.



HEALTH CARE AND A SMART CITY

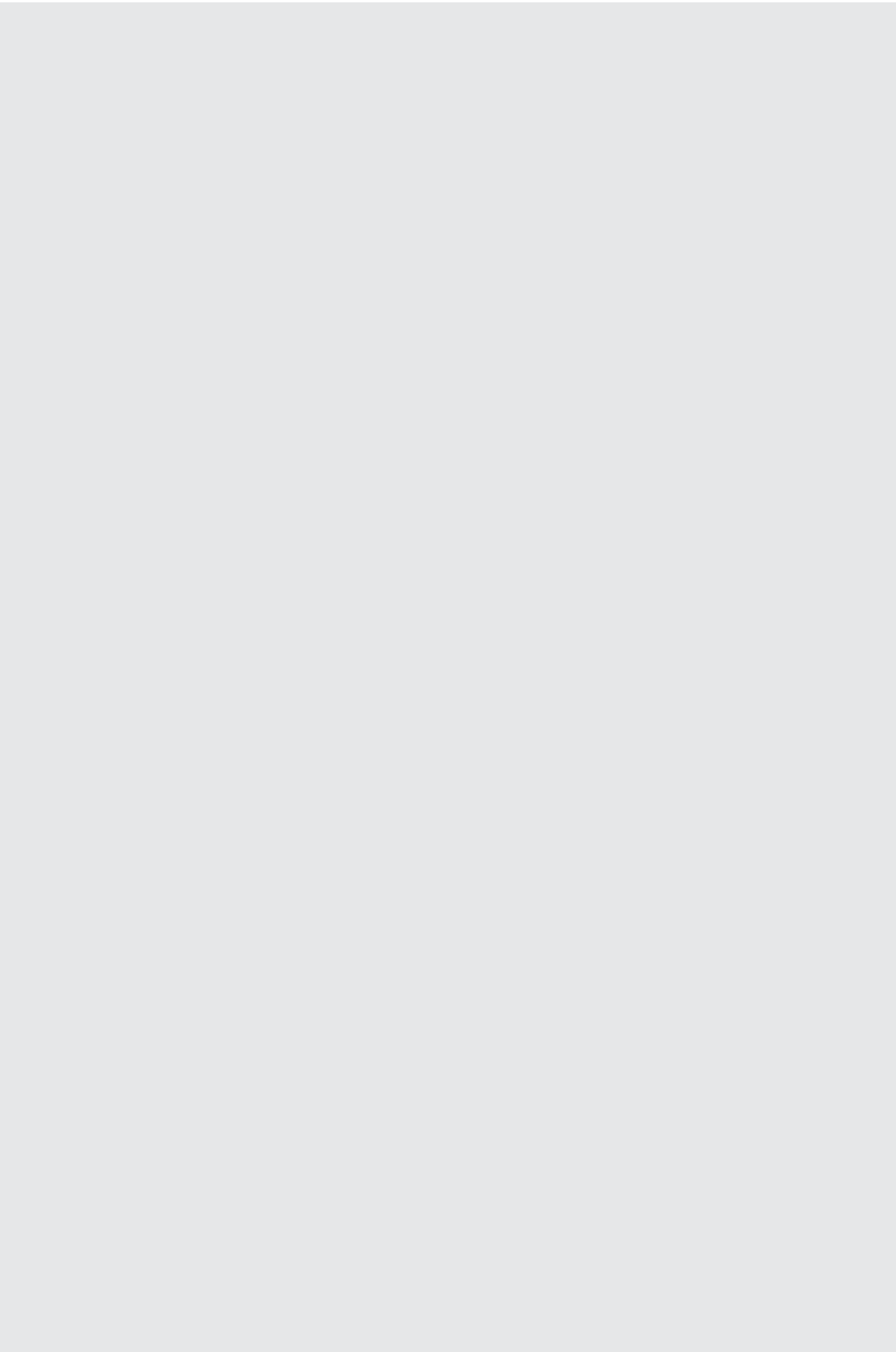
Targeting for 350,000 population by 2025, Putrajaya is well supplied with high quality health care facilities including a-state-of-the-art public hospital, health clinics and private clinics Located in Precinct 7, Putrajaya Hospital is one of the most technologically progressive hospitals in the country. Next door, the National Cancer Centre has been equipped with modern and high-tech facilities to treat and manage cancer patients.

Putrajaya has also set its goal in becoming a Smart City with the implementation of Internet of Things (IoT) and other information and communication technology, a move to propel the city to be a global model city.



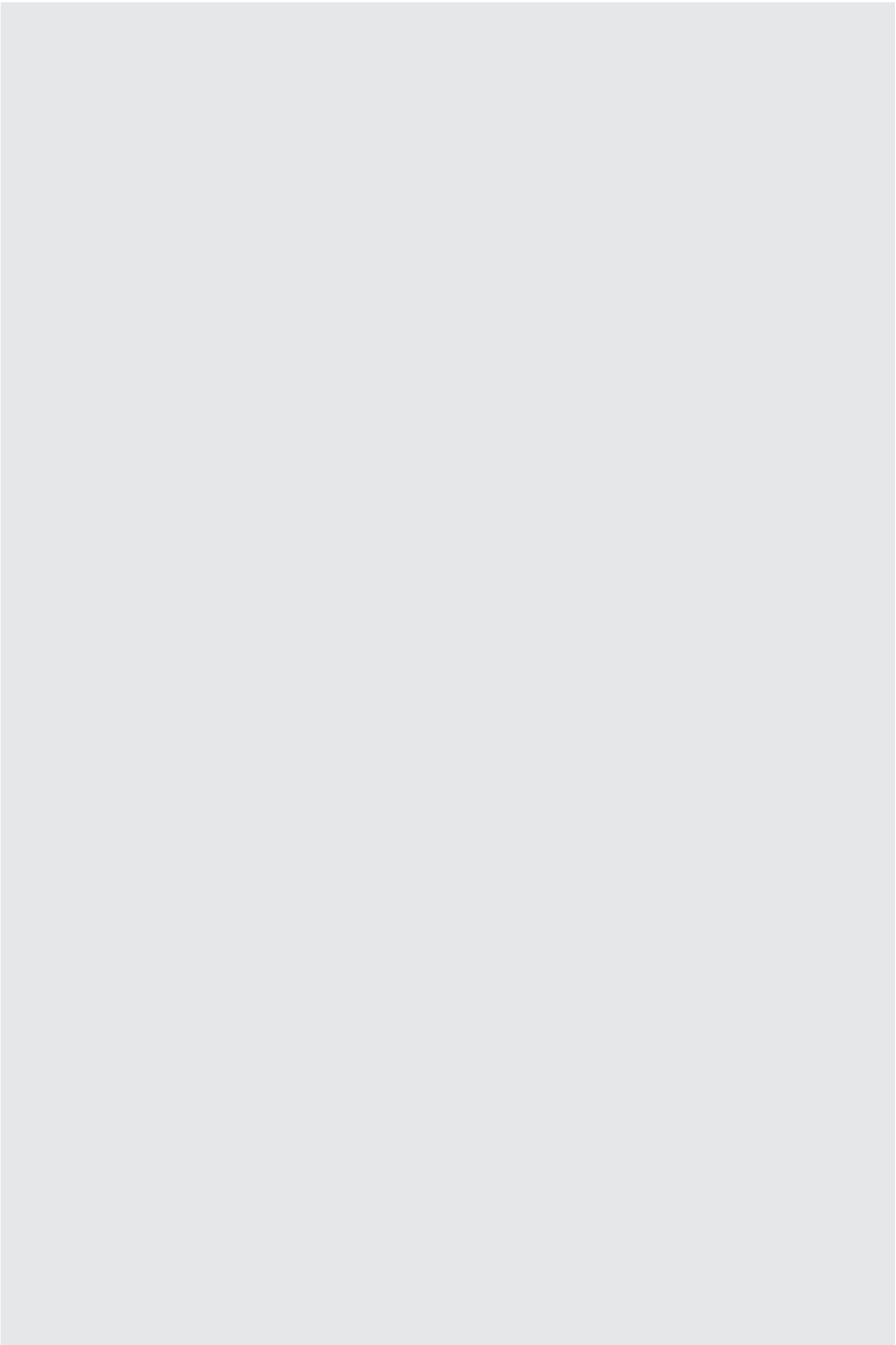
LIVABLE TOWNSHIP, BEST PLACE TO RAISE A FAMILY

Putrajaya is a great place to raise children because the crime rate is very low, even though the houses do not have gates. Since the city doesn't have many malls, pubs and clubs, social problems among teenagers and youngsters are few. There are now 25 government schools and an international school in Putrajaya. As with the rest of the city, schools in Putrajaya are well-planned and equipped with the latest interactive learning technology. The planning for schools in Putrajaya was made based on minimum walking distance to the school's main entrance. The ideal planned walking distance from one's home to the nearest primary school is 0.4 kilometer – 0.8 kilometer (10 minutes walking distance) while to a secondary school is 0.8 kilometer – 1.6 kilometer (20 minutes of walking). The world class Heriot-Watt University has a campus in Putrajaya, offering foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate studies across various fields, including Actuarial Science, Accounting and Finance. Putrajaya also provides a range of children's services including family day care, preschools and day care.



A CARING SOCIETY

Perbadanan Putrajaya, as a concerned and responsible authority, also emphasizes urban security and safety by using the state-of-the-art technology, upgrading Putrajaya Command Centre, enhancing the city's CCTV system and creating panic buttons in specific strategic locations. In addition to that Perbadanan Putrajaya is also promoting a concept called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to discourage and prevent crime and create a sense of security and well-being among community members and at the same time encourage honest citizens to keep a watchful eye. As for a caring society, universal design to cater for the disabled are also incorporated in the design of all public buildings in Putrajaya. Solid fencing around the perimeter of each house is discouraged so as to promote interaction and socialisation among neighbours and to revive the sense of community that existed in the good old kampong days. Hedges, shrubs and trees are used instead to demarcate one house from the next. This has become one of the unique selling points of houses in the city.



CONNECTIVITY OPTIONS

Traffic jams are uncommon in Putrajaya even on weekdays, giving the enclave a relaxing vibe. Connectivity options make it easier for Putrajaya residents to either go to Kuala Lumpur via the Maju Expressway (MEX) under 30 minutes or Seremban via the PLUS Expressway. Driving to the Kuala Lumpur International Airport takes 25 minutes or less.



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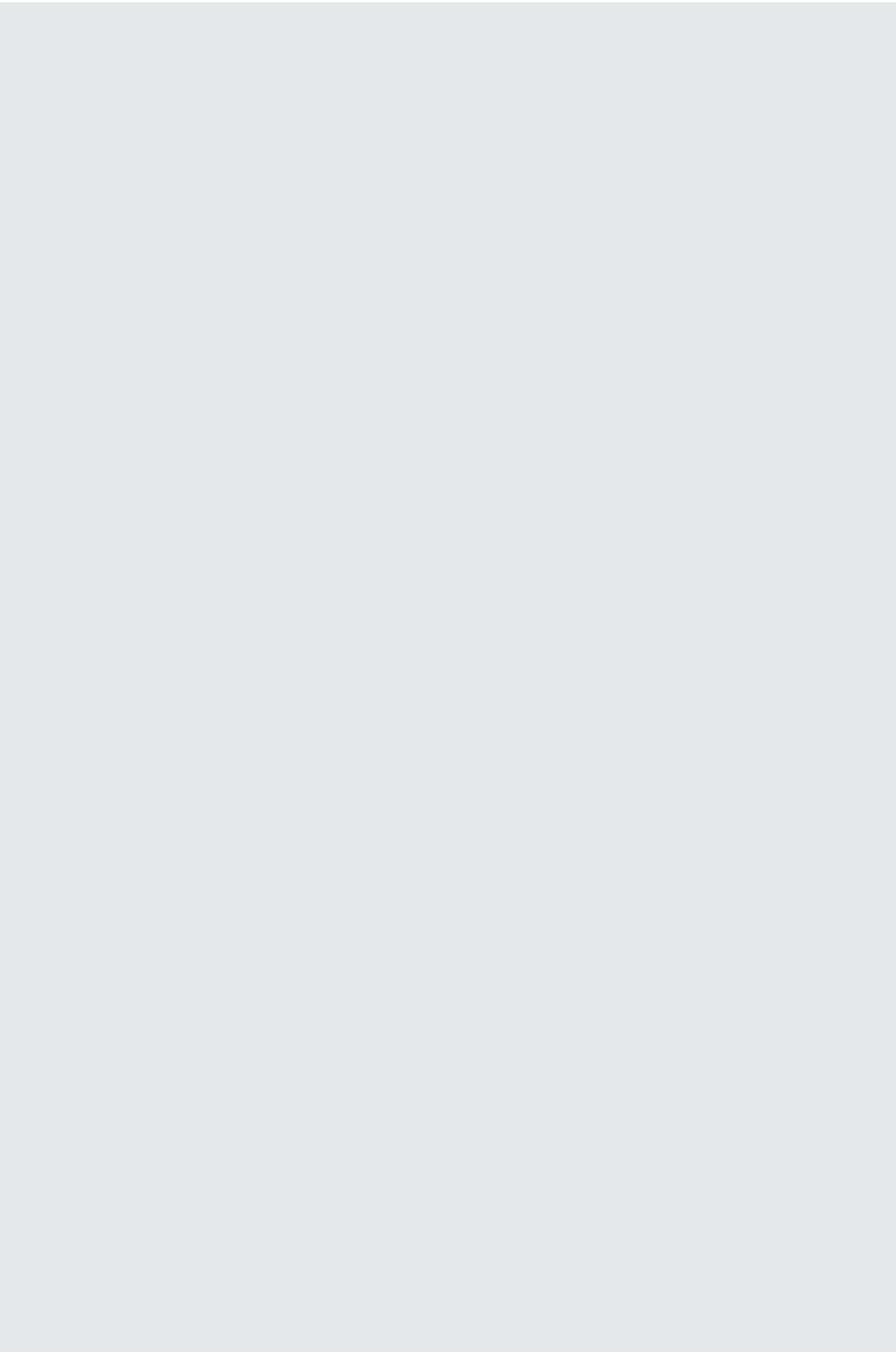
HOME TO MANY EVENTS

The first historic event organized in Putrajaya was the 46th Merdeka celebration or the independence anniversary celebration on August 31, 2003 which was held at the Putrajaya Boulevard. A total of 22,640 participants took part in the parade which was the largest ever held since Malaysia’s independence. This was followed by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit, held at the Putrajaya International Conference Centre in October 2003. After that, Putrajaya has become home to many other international events such as the Putrajaya International Hot Air Balloon Fiesta, Light and Motion Putrajaya Festival (LAMPJU), Royal Floria Putrajaya (FLORIA Putrajaya),Putrajaya Formula E Championship, Le Tour de Langkawi, Putrajaya International Islamic Art & Culture Festival, Putrajaya International Red Bull Air Race, Formula 1 Powerboat and many more.

Putrajaya is much more than an administrative capital. There’s something for everyone in the city: award-winning homes, technology, healthcare, good food, a busy events calendar, education, family-friendly outdoor activities in addition to spending lazy days at the parks.



09. Migration



DECISION TO MOVE

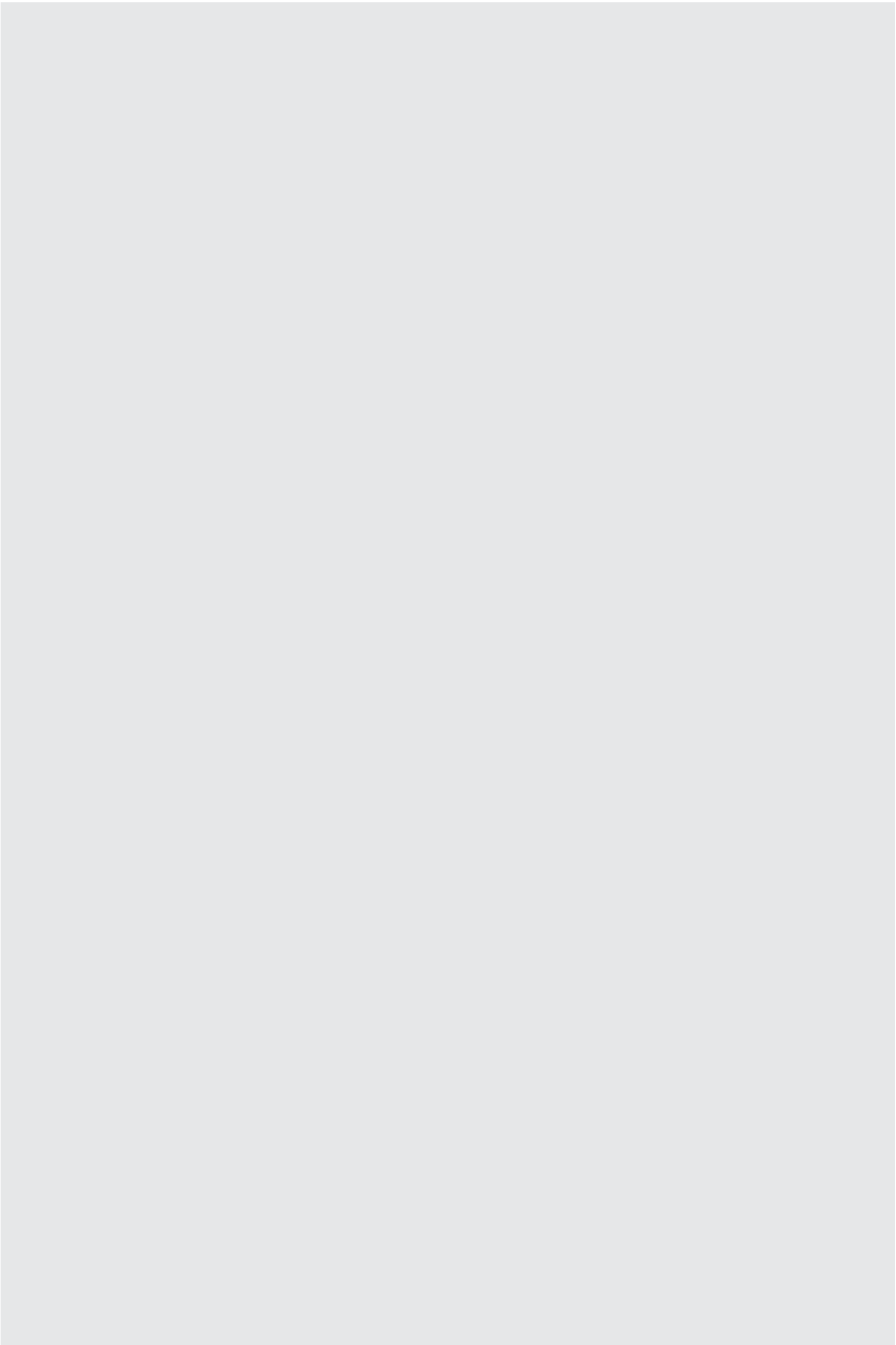
With everything in place, the time had finally arrived for the new Federal Government Administrative Centre to throw its doors open and warmly embrace the first group of occupants from the Prime Minister's Office. Due to Perdana Putra's underlying importance, the sprawling complex that houses the Prime Minister's Office was completed well ahead of the other ministerial buildings in Putrajaya. At the time, the officers were rather hesitant on initiating the historic move as there were still minor outstanding work that had to be sorted out at their new home before it was ready for occupancy.

Despite that, everyone started falling in line when Tun Dr Mahathir gave the go ahead to move. With excitement clearly written on their faces, the staffers looked beyond the minute unfinished details and whole heartedly agreed that it was as good a time as any for them to start shifting to their new home at Block A dan B, Perdana Putra Complex in Putrajaya's Precinct 1. Datuk Houd Sirat, who was then Administration and Finance Secretary in the Prime Minister's Department, recalls: "The Prime Minister was the prime mover for the migration. We started making preparations right from the moment he gave the directive. To all of us at that time, the move to Putrajaya was under way and no obstacle was too difficult to surmount." The move involved all the departments and agencies under the Prime Minister's Office which was, at that time, operating from the Government Complex in Jalan Dato Onn, Bukit Perdana, Kuala Lumpur. These included the offices of the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Chief Secretary to the Government and Science Advisor as well as the Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU), Economic Planning Unit (EPU) and the Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU).



STRUCTURED MIGRATION

As the move involved a large number of staff members who totalled in excess of 5,000, the entire process was carried out in stages based on the schedule provided by Putrajaya Holdings, the main developer that was tasked with the construction of all the office buildings and facilities in Putrajaya. With initial preparations like the supply of cardboard storage boxes and transportation tenders already settled, everyone at the Prime Minister’s Department began moving into Putrajaya with an upbeat mood. There were rare instances of minor delays when a few office spaces were still in the final stages of fitting out and were, therefore, not ready for occupancy. “In order to address, the Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali, the Deputy Chief Secretary of the Prime Minister’s Department Datuk Abdullah Kuntom and I made regular weekly visits to monitor the progress. We were quick to send the green light to our waiting colleagues back in Jalan Dato Onn as soon as we received the all clear signal from Putrajaya Holdings,” Datuk Houd elaborates further. The move turned out to be a truly memorable affair for those involved as they were not only treated to the rare experience of having police outriders leading their convoy but it also marked a fresh start at a very special place that had been hot topic the news for quite some time. Logistically speaking, the move was very well executed and everything went smoothly apart from several minor hiccups. For instance, more filing cabinets had to be brought in from Jalan Dato Onn when those at the new offices were found to be inadequate.



CHALLENGES FACED

In spite of the overall spirit of goodwill and compromise, government had anticipated that certain quarters, especially the subordinate and support staff, would not be able to come to terms with what they considered as a drastic change. Among these minority groups were those who were so adamant to remain in Kuala Lumpur that they threatened to hand in resignation letters if forced to move while others resorted to the drastic act of submitting transfer applications to other departments that were designated to remain in Kuala Lumpur like the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), Defence Ministry and Works Ministry. Among the grouses aired during those early days were the increased travelling time from their homes in Kuala Lumpur to Putrajaya as well as the lack of basic facilities like schools, clinics, shops and supermarkets available at their new work place. In order to alleviate those perceived problems and lend a helping hand to those starting a new life in Putrajaya, a decision was made to provide transportation allowances of RM150 to those who drove to work while regular shuttle buses were arranged to pick up non-driving staff at designated pick up points like Pertama Shopping Complex, Serdang as well as at their old work place at Jalan Dato Onn.

The quantum of allowance for drivers was established after Datuk Houd submitted a proposal to the government based on the amount of refuelling expenditure required to drive from Kuala Lumpur to Putrajaya and back. Despite this, there were isolated reports of employees who took advantage of the government's generous gesture by pocketing the transportation allowance and still taking the complimentary shuttle bus to Putrajaya. This abuse of public funds came to an end when senior officers disguised themselves as bus conductors to identify the culprits. A year later, an application was made for the government to extend the transportation allowance for a further twelve months after it was discovered that the Prime Minister's Department staff members had yet to fully adapt themselves to the change.



AFFORDABLE SPACIOUS QUARTERS

Although a large number of government quarters were made available for those who opted to stay in Putrajaya but there were very few takers during the initial stages. However, when it became common knowledge that the spacious three-room units, measuring about 1,200 square feet each, were available for rent to lower grade staff at a nominal monthly rate of just RM200, those eligible began clamouring to apply for a unit to call their own. Those who were financially savvy, however, saw this as an opportunity to make some easy money by renting out or sub-letting their homes in Kuala Lumpur at higher rates and pocketing the difference after taking up residence at the heavily subsidised Putrajaya staff quarters! Over time, these teething issues were amicably resolved and Putrajaya became a home that everyone was happy and proud to live in.



Tun Dr Mahathir (C) and wife Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali on his first day of work at his new office Putra Perdana, June 21, 1999.

FIRST RESIDENTS

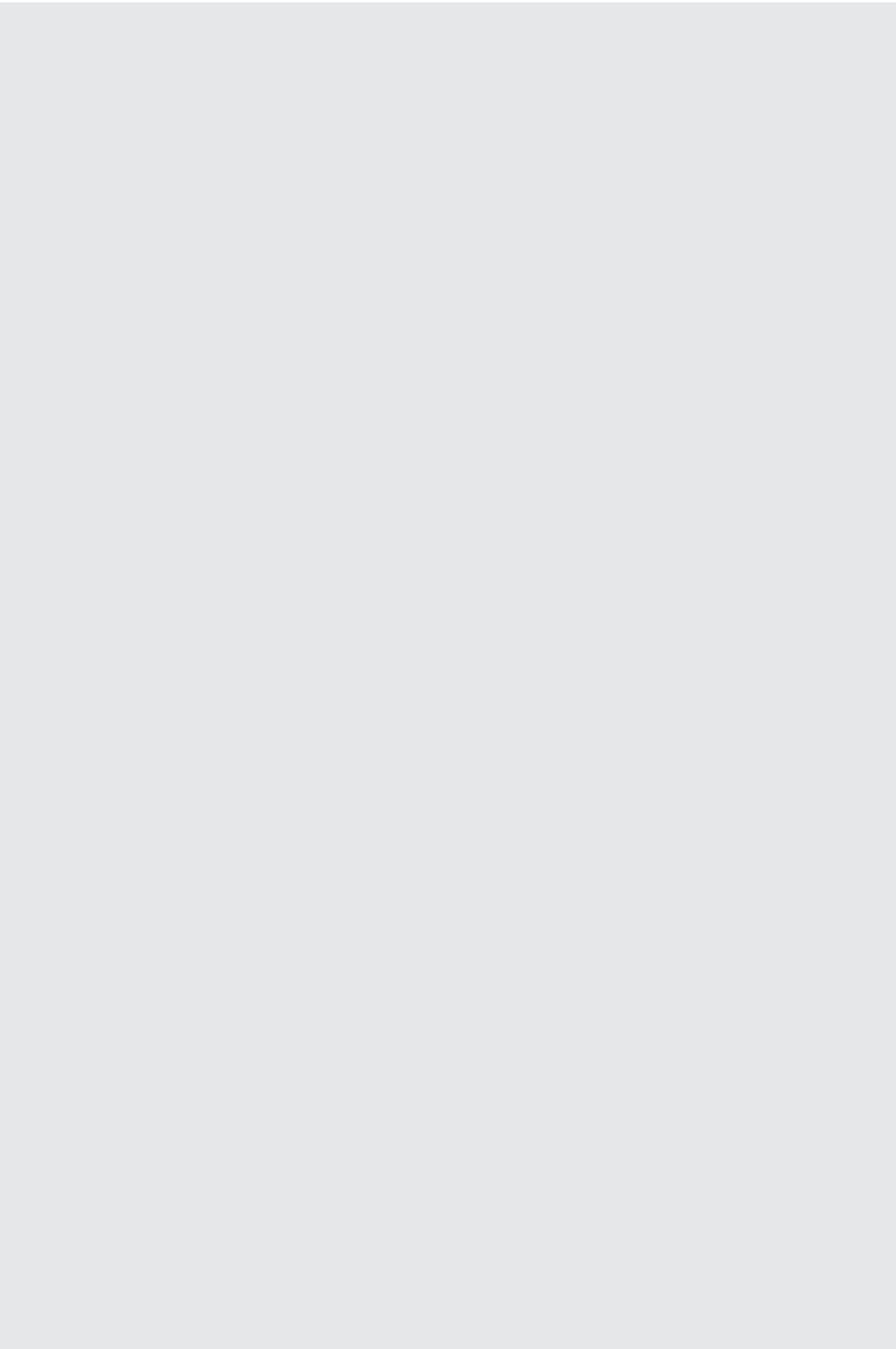
The National Security Division and Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU) made history in Putrajaya as the first government entity to commence operations at the Prime Minister's Office complex in May 1999. Chief Secretary to the Government, Tan Sri Abdul Halim started work at his new office on June 1, 1999. Despite having to contend with noise of construction workers still labouring away at a neighbouring block, Tun Dr Mahathir went ahead with the decision to start work at his new office on June 21, 1999. Just two days later, the first cabinet meeting in Putrajaya was convened. As an exemplary leader, Tun Dr Mahathir did not make any fuss about the problems faced during his transition to Putrajaya. A rather humorous incident did, however, come to light when the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Datuk Badariah Ahmad lodged a complaint with Perbadanan Putrajaya when a rodent fell on to Tun Dr Mahathir's working desk. Rodents were one of the original inhabitants of Putrajaya as the city was built on estate land which used to be their natural habitat. While construction work was underway, they were also attracted by the availability of food left behind by the construction workers. By the end of June 1999, Putrajaya reached another historic milestone when more than 1,000 people congregated at Masjid Putra to perform their first Friday prayers there.

Residents of Putrajaya in the early 2000s.



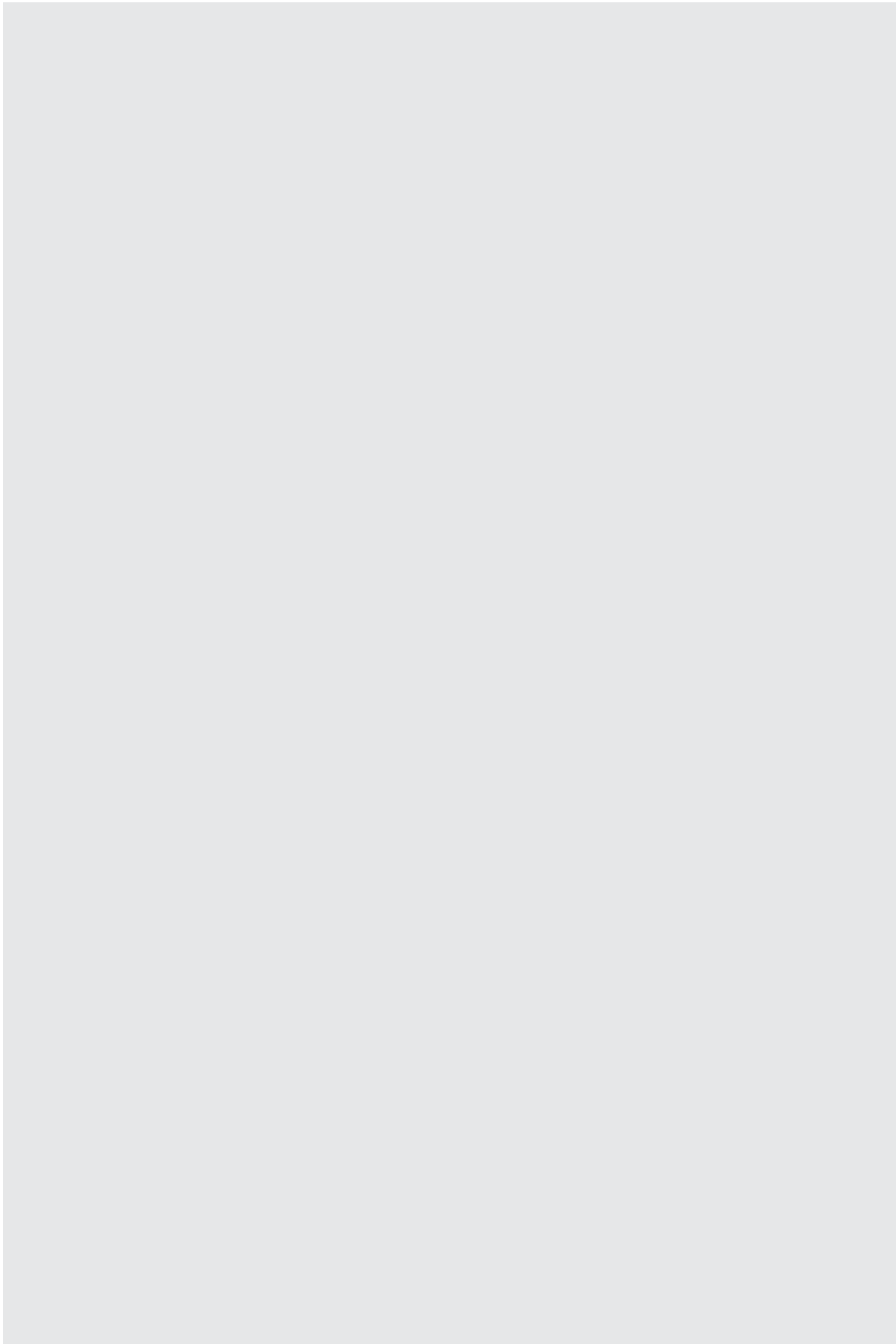
ADAPTING TO A NEW HOME

During their first few months in Putrajaya, the office workers faced difficulties in getting food as there was no staff canteen. Their only remedy was to either rely on food vendors who set up shop near their work place or drive all the way to the nearest kampong (village) which was Sungai Merab. Residents staying at the staff quarters were also not spared. The market and grocery store were yet to commence operation and food items like meat, fish and vegetables had to be acquired, with much inconvenience, from nearby places as well. Once again, the Prime Minister's Office stepped in to help resolve the predicament by setting up a Farmers' Market at the basement of Block B8 with the assistance of the Agriculture Department. The presence of the market, however, gave rise to a rather unconventional practice where office workers were forced to do their grocery shopping, including the purchase of fresh fish, during office hours as the market closed at 4 pm. Keeping the purchases at their respective work stations until it was time to go home, inadvertently gave a small number of offices in Perdana Putra, during those early formative months, a subtle but yet distinct odour whenever the work day extended beyond the half way mark! When the market was finally ready in Precinct 8 and plans to close down the Farmers' Market were made known, the stall owners at the basement of Block B8, petitioned to the Prime Minister's Department continue seeking their livelihood there. After taking into consideration their useful services rendered in the past, the Farmers' Market was allowed to remain in operation for a while longer.



EARLY RECREATION OPTIONS

During those early days, Putrajaya lacked places of attraction for its residents and their source of recreation was limited to existing parks and lakes where cycling and canoeing were the only available options. At that time, the various programs that were already in the pipeline to enrich the lives of those staying in the city were yet to be implemented.



GIVING THEIR BEST

Nights in Putrajaya at the beginning were very quiet with Perdana Putra serving as the only bright spot as orders were given to keep the lights until dawn. The other reason for the intentional light up was because Datuk Houd knew that Tun Dr Mahathir loved to show off the beauty of Perdana Putra to invited guests from his balcony at Seri Perdana after dinner. During the day, steps were also taken to ensure that everything was in perfect order. A classic case in point is the monthly assembly for the Prime Minister's Department Staff held at the Prime Minister's Square. A special task force is always at hand to ensure that all the flags are put up in the correct order before Tun Dr Mahathir stood with his back facing the flag poles to deliver his speech. An incident that happened during that time highlights the alertness and preparedness of the officials in the Prime Minister's Department perfectly. A widespread power failure covering all of Klang Valley including Putrajaya happened when a cabinet meeting was convened at Perdana Putra. Thanks to the careful maintenance of the latest state-of-the-art equipment, especially the uninterrupted power supply system, the ministerial meeting went on without a hitch. The transition to the backup power system was so seamless that Tun Dr Mahathir and his colleagues only realised what was going on after they stepped out of the building.



PUTRAJAYA TODAY

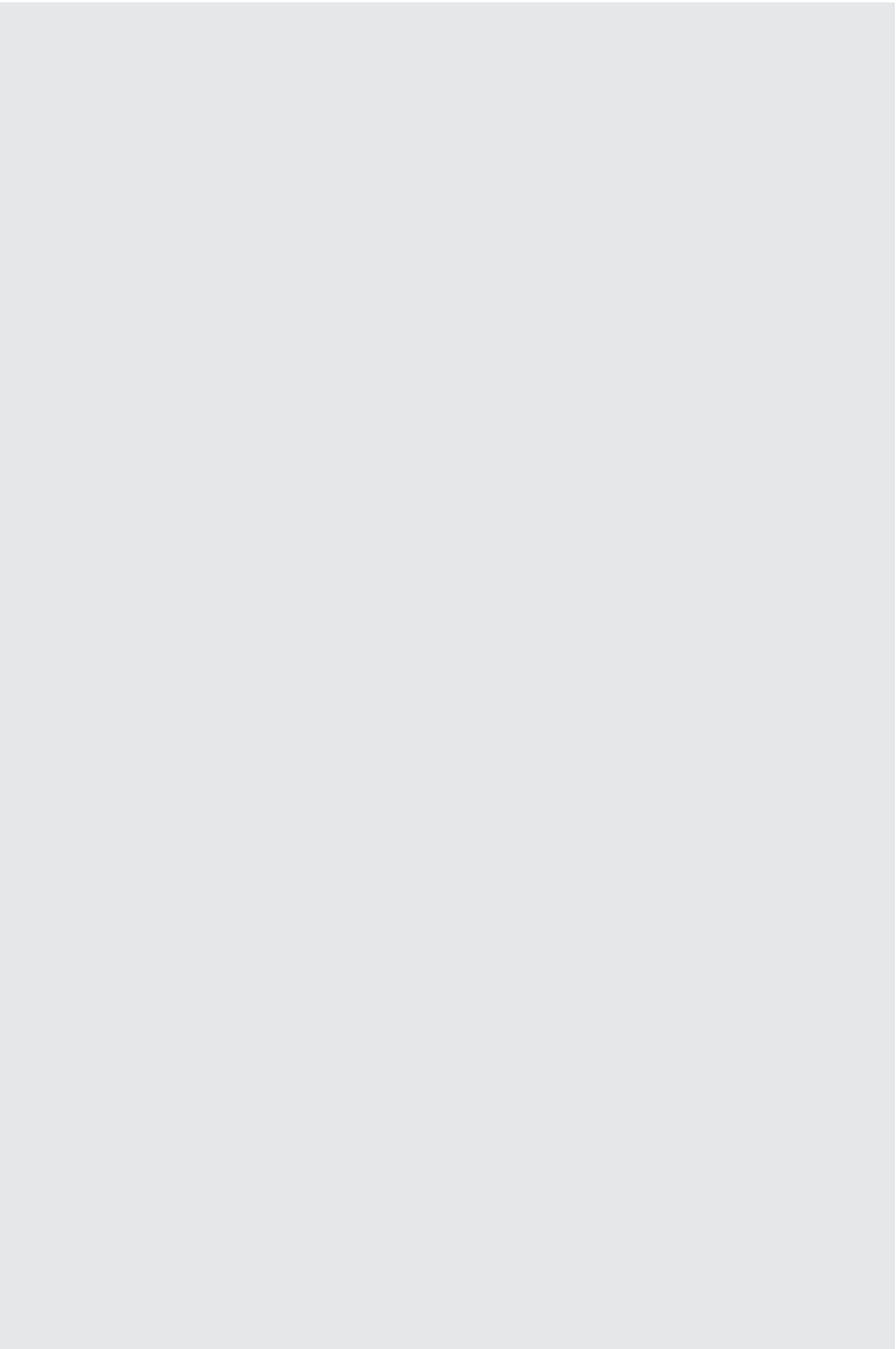
One of the last ministries to move to Putrajaya was the Housing and Local Government Ministry when their new premises in Precinct 4 became fully operational in September 1, 2011. For the government, the migration of government offices into their own buildings in Putrajaya was definitely a step in the right direction especially when it resulted in substantial savings on high rentals in Kuala Lumpur which amounted to more than RM125.8 million annually. Today, Putrajaya has taken on its role as Malaysia’s administrative capital with great success. Apart from that, the stunning city has played host repeatedly to countless diplomatic functions and will continue to serve as a potent symbol of the nation’s ambitious modernization agenda for a long time to come. Looking back, Putrajaya’s excellent “infrastructure first” strategy made sure that most of the people’s comfort and convenience were addressed right from the moment they moved into a ready-made city. Since the migration of federal government offices began in mid-1999, the city has been well equipped with world class amenities including roads, schools, bridges, hospitals, parks, gardens and speciality shops as well as the full spectrum of public utilities like water and electricity supply and the latest telecommunications systems. Today, with its many world class facilities and amenities, Putrajaya is considered one of the best places to live in Malaysia.



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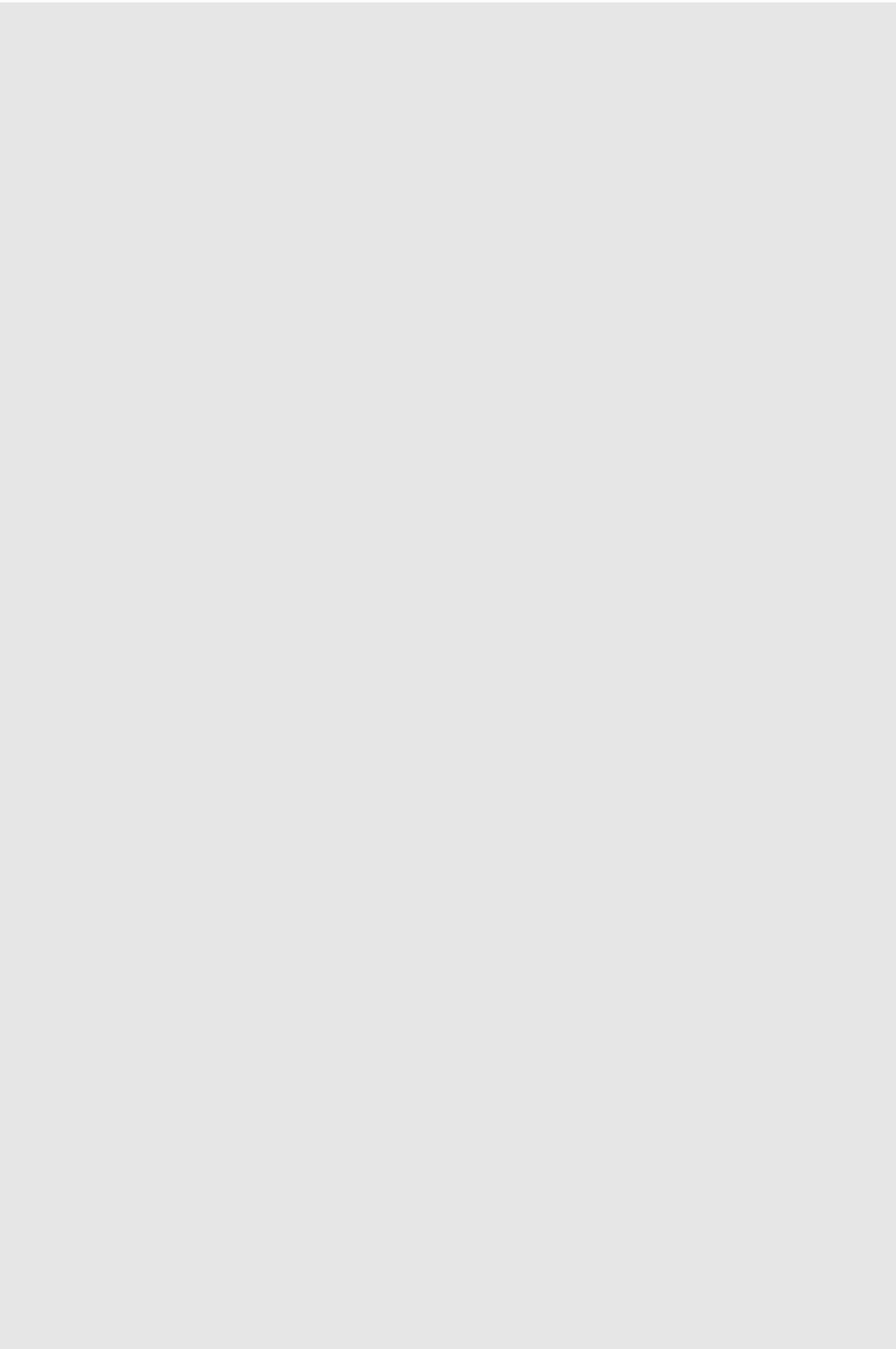


10. Challenges



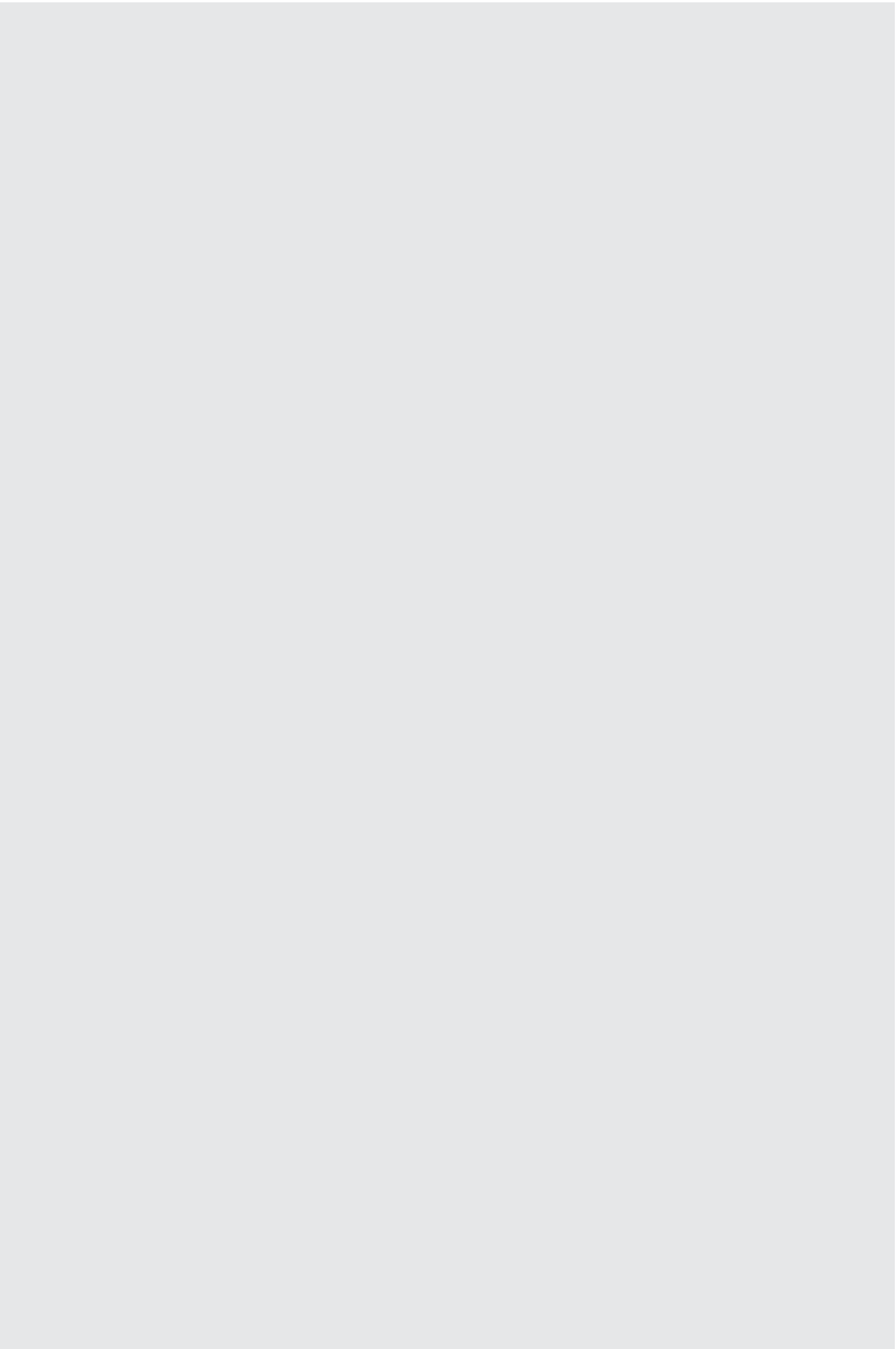
NOT WITHOUT CHALLENGES

Putrajaya's development is moving rapidly, all relevant parties are cooperating remarkably and the process of conceptualizing the intelligent garden city has gone smoothly. However, this does not mean that realization of this administrative capital has been without challenges. Imagine, in the space of 21 months, the committee and the team involved in managing this project have successfully acquired the land; prepared the city master plan; drafted the legislation for the creation of Perbadanan Putrajaya; signed an agreement with the Selangor state government; and found local experts to help realize this dream. While each of these tasks had its own challenges, the high spirits, ingenuity and unwavering commitment of relevant stakeholders made the project a success. All challenges were tackled and each problem was able to be easily resolved with the support from the highest levels of leadership to project managers and construction supervisors.



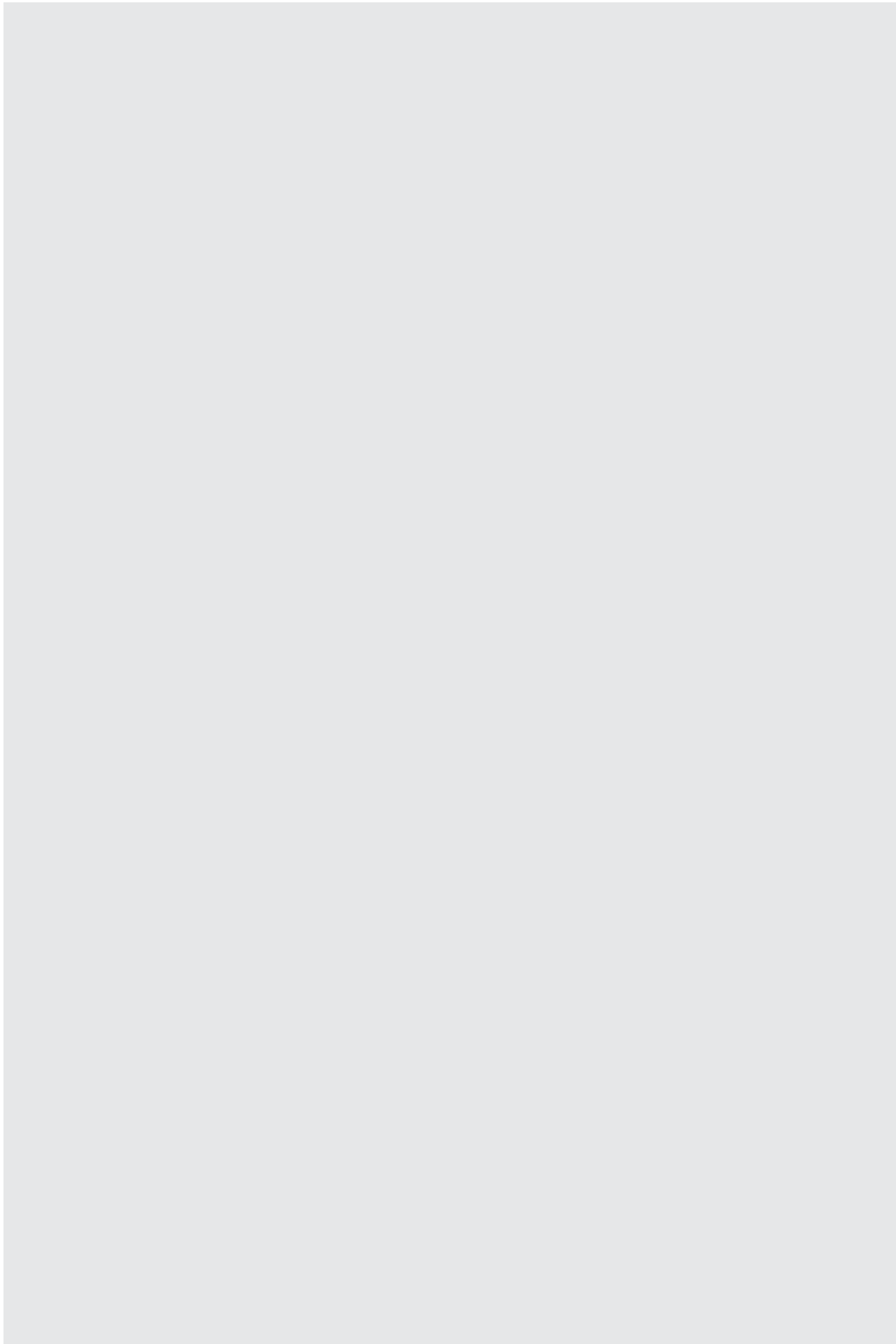
ATTACKS & ACCUSATIONS

While the Government was quite clear concerning what it wanted the development of Putrajaya to be, and understood the positive impacts it would have, others lobbed unfounded accusations for political mileage. One political party claimed that the development of Putrajaya was a waste, and not only that, used the project as leverage to attack Tun Dr Mahathir by saying he was putting up a costly monument for himself. The stakeholders involved in the development of Putrajaya did not remain silent and organized efforts to end these attacks and accusations. Datuk Zainuddin Muhammad, former JPBD Director-General, still remembers being involved in a special briefing of members of Parliament concerning the development of Putrajaya. He even invited opposition political leaders to visit the Perdana Putra (Prime Minister's office) and only after that, the issue began to settle.



ASIAN ECONOMIC CRISIS

At that time, Malaysia was still nursing the wounds from the Asian economic crisis 1997. Many media reports concerning the development of Putrajaya have described how it had to slow down during the crisis. While it is true that the crisis was one of the challenges that the Government had to face, it is wrong to say that the pace of the city’s construction had slowed. When the ringgit witnessed major dips to under RM3.80 for every USD1.00 by the end of 1997 and fluctuated between RM3.80 and RM4.40 in early 1998, Putrajaya Holdings, the master developer of Putrajaya, assured stakeholders that it and its partners would continue the national project as usual. To Putrajaya Holdings, there was no need to exaggerate the challenges and difficulties during the crisis because they considered Putrajaya development a low-risk project with a ready-made market i.e.; the government. For Putrajaya Holdings, revenue would come from joint venture returns, the sale and rental of commercial and residential buildings, and most of all government lease rental. The last source gave the company tremendous financial clout, which it used to go shopping for more ringgit to part-finance the project. Putrajaya Holdings, with its respected and high performing shareholders, especially Petronas, explored new avenues in the more cost-efficient bond market. This is when it turned to Islamic financial instruments, setting an example for the rest of corporate Malaysia to follow.



PERCEPTION ISSUE

After Putrajaya was occupied, preceded by the relocation of the Prime Minister’s Department, new challenges began to emerge. Putrajaya eventually began to face the perception that it was a “civil-service town” when in fact it was actually seeking private sector investments. Tun Azizan himself has voiced his opinion on this issue, adding that the misconception may be due to the way the city was being promoted to the public that it is merely the seat of the Federal Government’s administration. Azizan also described Putrajaya at that time as too quiet at night. This may be because most Putrajaya residents are the subordinate and support staff who tend not to eat out at night.

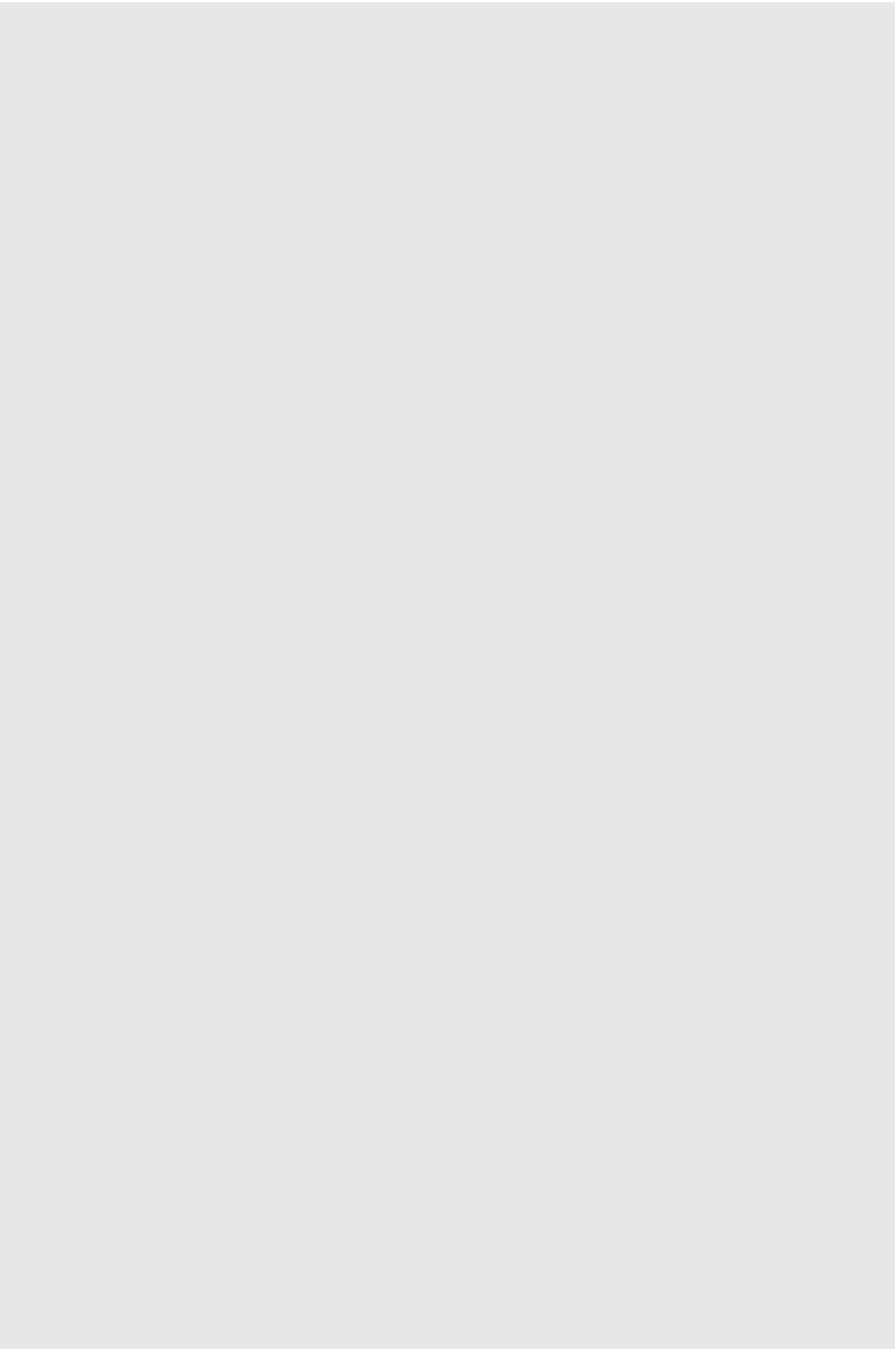
For some time, the Perbadanan Putrajaya has been promoting the city to attract the private sector and boost the economy. Efforts are constantly being made to make the city more vibrant and richer with activities, aiming for sustainable living and working environment on par with other planned administrative cities in the world.



FINDING A SENSE OF BELONGING

In addition, the sense of belonging among residents of Putrajaya is lacking and it is clear that many people living there fail to think of the city as the true home of themselves and their families. Most residents consider Putrajaya to be only a place to earn a living as a civil servant and after that is finished, they retire and return to their hometowns, leaving Putrajaya to the next generation. This way of thinking is why a sense of belonging is largely absent in the hearts of the people of Putrajaya. Also, values related to the spirit of collectivism and teamwork are poor among Putrajaya residents. For example, gotong-royong (collective clean-up) as implemented in the zones of Putrajaya are attended only by local leaders and those who are active members of the local surau (mosques).





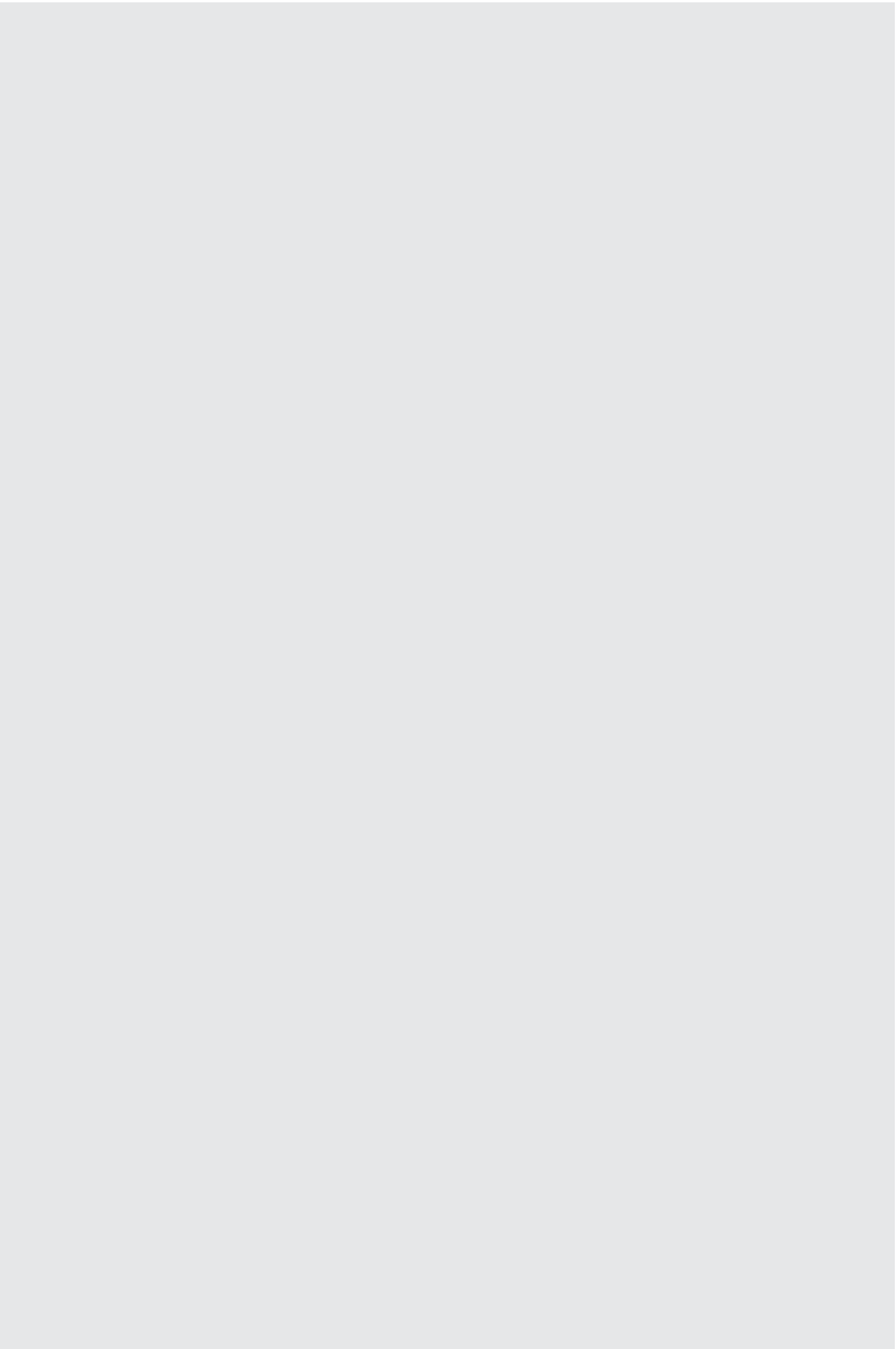
FINISH FAST, BUT NO COMPROMISE ON QUALITY

The federal government administrative capital was a fast-track project and had a fixed time frame. Thus, everyone was working under a ticking clock. However, they kept in mind that while adhering to a strict schedule, they couldn't compromise on quality and workmanship. Because of this, there were no serious issues concerning contractors turning in work which was substandard or inferior. This is because the plans given to the contractors clearly listed the goals to be met. If there were any dissatisfaction, reprimands were issued and the problem was resolved at the construction site, although there were incidents of yelling on occasion.

Despite all these challenges, many believe that Putrajaya will continue to be a city that is relevant to the present and future, and will rank among the world's well-planned and well-managed cities, provided that the guidelines put in place by the local authority, designers and the developers are not ignored to meet commercial demand and the will of those who do not understand its history.



11. The Pride of the Nation



SUBHEADING GOES HERE

Over the years, Putrajaya has received countless accolades from world leaders who have never failed to express their utter amazement at the Federal Government Administrative Centre’s many stunning attributes. Among the many heads of state who have graced Putrajaya and had spontaneously voiced commendations at what they saw were Russian President Vladimir Putin, former South African President Nelson Mandela, former Cuban President Fidel Castro and the Sultan of Brunei Sultan Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah.

At the same time, the 11th Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Hisamuddin Alam Shah Al-Haj was among the first Malaysian rulers and dignitaries to visit Putrajaya. Persiaran Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, Putrajaya’s main thoroughfare is named after this Selangor monarch. Today, Malaysians from all walks of life look on with delight as Putrajaya has become the pride of the nation as well as the symbol of a mature and sustainable system of governance in this country. Well equipped with world-class facilities and infrastructure, it bears testimony to Malaysia’s ever present readiness to strengthen its administrative capabilities and face 21st century challenges with confidence and courage.

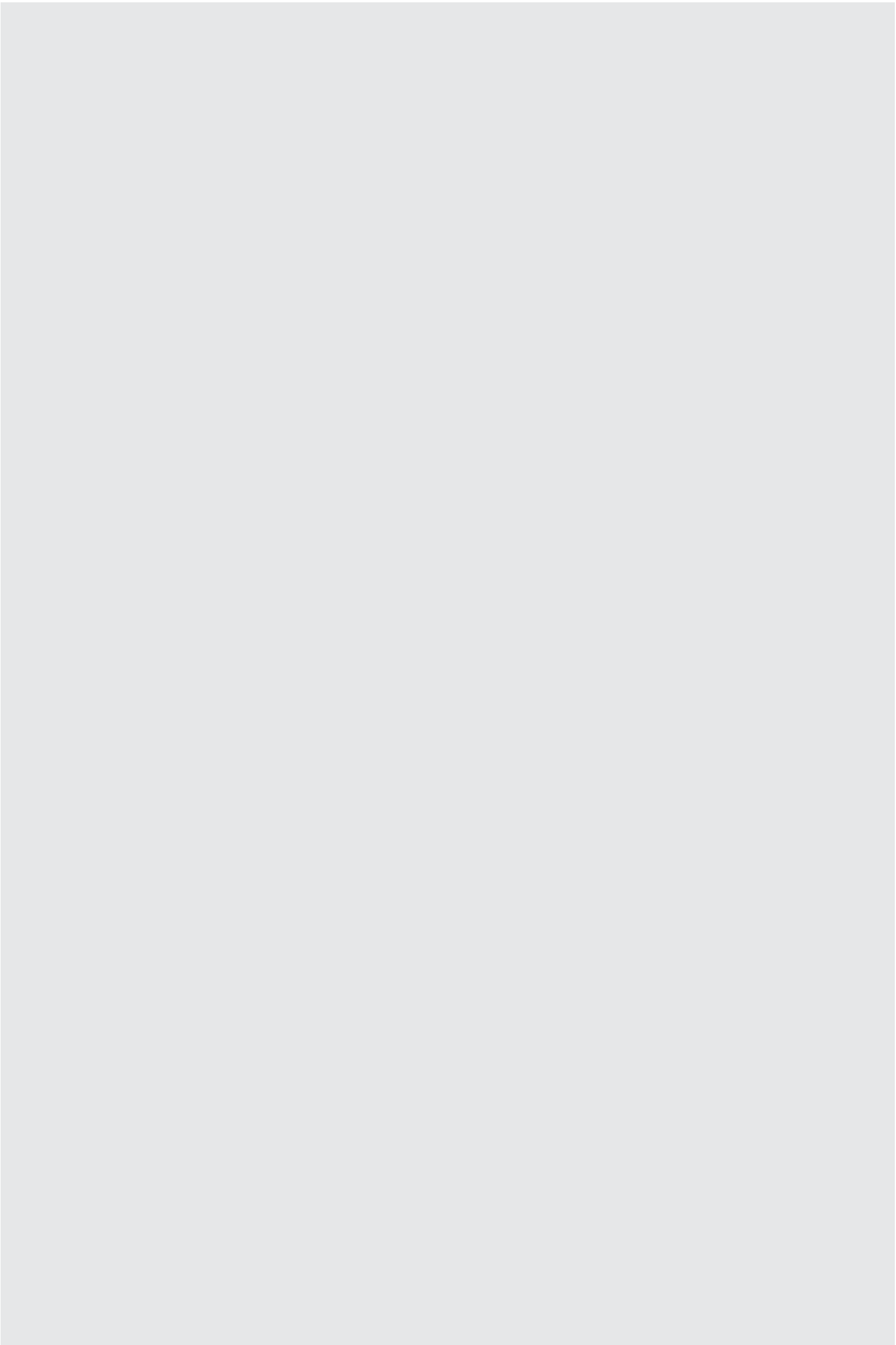


INITIAL DOUBTS

In spite of all the glowing recognition that Putrajaya has received since its completion, things were, however, very much different during its early formative years. News of its planned development back in the mid-1990s received extensive media coverage and that gave rise to wide ranging reactions from all sectors, from the common man on the street right up to distinguished captains of industry. While some were supportive, there were quite a number of sceptical naysayers who came up with their own less glowing conclusions from the likes of previous mega projects. Fortunately, the team responsible for the project's success drew strength from their confidence and, as a result, the negative reports did little to dent their passion and commitment. Conscious that the project at hand was going to become a national legacy, they strived on all counts to perfect what had been entrusted onto their hands.

At the same time, the parties related to the development of Putrajaya took pride that the person monitoring their progress was none other than the Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir, himself. Even during the construction period when there was not much to be marvelled at yet, Putrajaya never failed to attract throngs of visitors who were curious to see how the promised state-of-the-art city was shaping up. These visitors who consisted primarily of dignitaries, heads of government departments, regional council representatives as well as visitors from abroad were warmly welcomed by the Perbadanan Putrajaya employees who were more than proud to show them the city that was growing from the ground up.

Even at that time, those who cast sight on the skeletal structures of the Prime Minister's Office complex, Putra Mosque and Putrajaya Square would not have found it difficult to imagine the grand splendour that the city was bound to behold within the next few years.



PROMISE A GREAT CITY

Reflecting back on those early years with profound fondness, one pioneer staff recalled a hilarious moment that took place when Tun Azizan surveyed the construction site from a higher elevation together with his invited guest from Switzerland. Barely able to contain his excitement and to the bewilderment of his foreign companion, Tun Azizan began pointing out various key locations earmarked for future developments. After he had finished rattling off names of major buildings and pointed out the place where the four-kilometre long boulevard was going to be built, his guest chuckled and said that he had no inkling of what was being said. His remark comes as no surprise as Putrajaya at that time was nothing more than just several pieces of vacant land surrounded by large tracts of rubber and oil palm plantations.

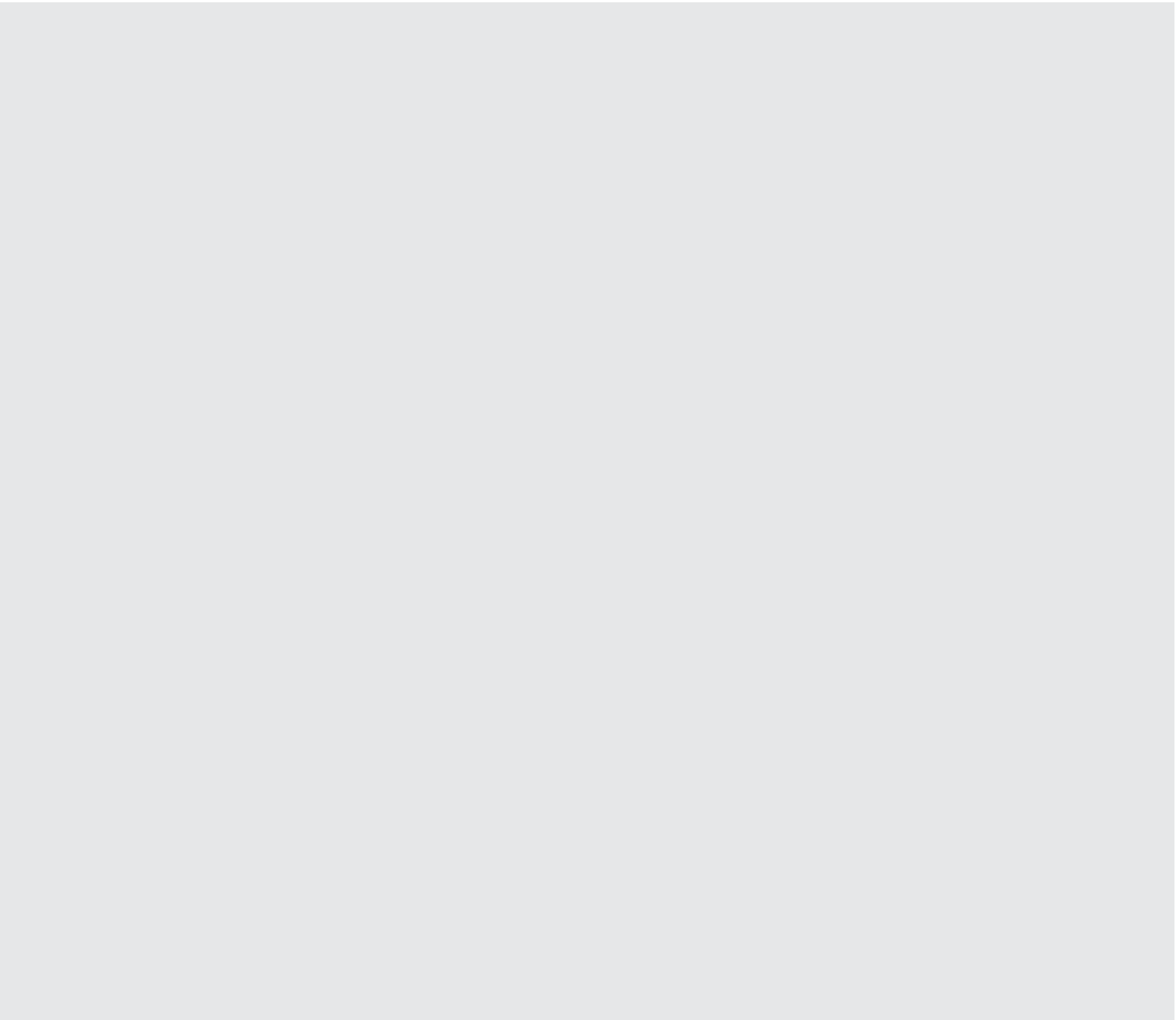
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The words made everyone realise the gravity of the situation. Since the decision to host the National Day event was a Ministerial Cabinet directive, all parties involved including Perbadanan Putrajaya, Putrajaya Holdings and all the other appointed contractors made it their sole purpose to rise up to the challenge. No expense was spared to have Putrajaya ready by the time the nation celebrated the 46th anniversary of Independence.



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LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

When the time came, the 2003 Merdeka celebrations turned out to be a resounding success. Everyone involved heaved a sigh of relief as the military tanks and other armoured ordnances rumbled proudly through the Putrajaya Boulevard that had just been completed the night before. That successful hosting gave Putrajaya the much needed confidence and was seen by many as the harbinger of more great things to come for the city.

Barely two months after the successful inaugural event, Putrajaya once again became venue to an even larger and more prestigious international gathering of world leaders. Weeks before the scheduled October 2003 Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit was held, a progress meeting was convened at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC). As the PICC was still in the fitting out process, representatives from the police, military, customs, health and other related government departments had to meet amidst sparse settings that was still devoid of basic installations and equipment like security scanning machines. Once again, the organisers, aware that the success of the summit would help increase Putrajaya's international standing and prestige, managed to surmount the challenges faced and prevailed against all odds to emerge as perfect OIC hosts. Bringing pride to Tun Dr Mahathir and all Malaysians, they showed the world that the modern smart city was not only a well-equipped Federal Government Administrative Centre but also had the capability and confidence to successfully play host to prestigious international conferences.

As a result, it comes as no surprise that many world leaders have set sights on Putrajaya as a benchmark in the planning and development of their own administrative cities. A classic case in point is the setting up of the Sejong Government Administrative Centre in South Korea. This is an honour for Putrajaya and good branding as it is not easy to be chosen as a partner of a developed country that is respected internationally. This in itself is an international recognition for Putrajaya.



12. Dreams to Reality



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13. A Labour of Love



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TUN AHMAD SARJI ABDUL HAMID

Former Chief Secretary to the Government

Although more than a quarter of a century has passed, Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid still vividly remembers the conceptualization process of Putrajaya, the federal government administrative centre, as if it only happened yesterday. This keen recollection does not come as a surprise as Tun Ahmad Sarji was among the first few to had the rare opportunity of putting this ambitious initiative into action after the idea was discussed and approved at a cabinet meeting in 1992.

“During those early stages of decision making no one had any idea as to where the new federal government administration centre would be built. The commitment to build the new city at Prang Besar, then an obscure rubber plantation owned by Golden Hope Plantations Berhad, was only made known a year later, in 1993,” Tun Ahmad Sarji revealed when asked during an interview about Putrajaya’s formative years.

Tun Ahmad Sarji was later appointed as Chairman of the Putrajaya Development Main Committee, which was specially formed to oversee the overall development of the new administrative city. Members of his team included heads of various related government agencies such as the JPBD and Public Works Department together with representatives from the Selangor state government.

The clout brought about by his position as the Chief Secretary to the Government went a long way in helping Tun Ahmad Sarji to effectively facilitate coordination between the various participating government bodies.

Turning back the clock a little further back, Tun Ahmad Sarji recalled how he had initially felt nervous about the herculean task at hand when it was first made known to him. Nevertheless, the head of the civil service steeled his resolve and took on the responsibility with resolve.

The decision to commit himself to the project was made easier by his unwavering belief that the relevant government departments had the necessary resources and capabilities to carry out the task of planning and developing the proposed federal government administration centre with

overwhelming success.

During the course of implementing his duties, Tun Ahmad Sarji regularly handed out relatively short deadlines for crucial tasks. His time limit that rarely extended beyond the period of two weeks was aimed at encouraging the involved parties to respond promptly and thus allow the rapid implementation of the various project stages that had already been approved by the government.

A classic case in point of Tun Ahmad Sarji’s efficient administrative hallmark were the speedy land transfer arrangements that were often concluded within the period of just a fortnight. This rapid decision making culture instilled by Tun Ahmad Sarji was important as he needed to have all the information ready at his fingertips during his weekly meetings with Tun Dr Mahathir to report on the development progress of Putrajaya. It was also during those regular meet up sessions that the Chief Secretary to the Government received additional directives from the Prime Minister himself

As a result of Tun Ahmad Sarji’s demanding work culture, the various department heads had to gradually become accustomed to the habit of working within tight time frames. “Interestingly, despite the many tight schedules, all those who were involved in the development of Putrajaya always showed high work spirits and motivation. This must have be attributed to their acute awareness that Putrajaya was a novel project that was close to the hearts of all involved. Among those who deserve special mention in exhibiting relentlessly high commitment levels were Datuk Zainudin Mohamad and Datuk Ahmad Bakri Shabdin,” he added with satisfaction in his voice.

During those early stages of development, these capable planners regularly visited the site at Prang Besar and worked hand in hand with consulting companies to come up with a development plan that accurately met Tun Dr Mahathir’s desire for a garden city concept. “With that, we managed to come up with a plan based on the doctrine of “Man and his Creator”, “Man and Man” and “Man and Nature,” Tun Ahmad Sarji concluded with pride.



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DATUK ZAINUDDIN MOHAMAD

Former Director-general of Town & Country Planning Department (JPBD)

Looking back at his involvement in the process of developing Putrajaya as the new federal government administrative centre, Datuk Zainuddin Mohamad was not only grateful for being given the rare privilege but also felt that it was a great honour for him to serve in such a prestigious project. While admitting that the task first appeared daunting at the initial stages, he also said that there was an overwhelming sense of excitement as participation in the project was viewed as a once in a lifetime opportunity.

The feeling was further reinforced by the fact that Putrajaya was a unique and special project as it was solely built using local expertise. “Apart from the sheer satisfaction derived after surmounting the various challenges faced, our multiple successes clearly demonstrated that our local talents and aptitudes were comparable to, if not better than, those of experts from abroad,” Datuk Zainuddin said during an interview.

Drawing on his vast experiences as the JPBD Director-General, Datuk Zainuddin provided unwavering leadership to a group of capable planners entrusted with the planning and development of the administrative city. During his tenure, he served as the Chairman for Putrajaya Development Technical Committee and Putrajaya Landscape Development Committee and was also a member of the Putrajaya Development Main Committee which was chaired by chief secretary to the government, Tun Ahmad Sarji.

Datuk Zainuddin’s involvement with the project can be traced right up to its infancy stage, during a time when even the site at Prang Besar was yet to be determined. It all began when JPBD, together with EPU, was requested to submit a feasibility study paper on the need to move the existing federal government administration centre out of Kuala Lumpur and, in the later stages, became engaged in the process of site selection.

During progress, he was appointed to lead a consortium of public and private entities that were established to develop the federal government administrative centre masterplan. While speaking on this, he elaborated: “Once the greenlight was given to relocate to Prang Besar, JPBD and six local firms namely Arkitek Jururancang, BEP Akitek, Hijjas Kasturi, Minconsult, Perunding Alam Bina

dan Rekarancang were invited to come up with a development plan for the federal government administrative centre within six weeks.”

“Although the draft plan submitted by JPBD was shortlisted after a comprehensive evaluation process, the draft plans submitted by the other firms were also acknowledged to have their own merits. As a result, the government requested for a masterplan that contained a combination of all the approved concepts. As the then Director-General, I was appointed to chair this consortium in the spirit of Malaysia Inc. where the core team consisted of JPBD planning officers who were assisted by the participating firms. A keen spirit of cooperation prevailed in the JPBD Operations Room each time all of us met to put our hearts and minds together to give our best to Putrajaya,” added Datuk Zainuddin proudly.

Among the preliminary tasks handled by JPBD during the preparatory stages of the site after it was selected were the simultaneous preparation of the Sepang District Structure Plan and the Prang Besar (Master Plan) which were approved by the government on February 22, 1995. Datuk Zainuddin, in his capacity as the JPBD Director-General, was appointed as the Local Planning Authority. His appointment was then gazetted under the provisions of the Local Government Act and TCP Act 172. At the same time, JPBD was entrusted by the government to act as the Acquiring Agency for the Putrajaya development site.

In addition, the JPBD was also involved in drafting of the Perbadanan Putrajaya Act which led to the establishment of Perbadanan Putrajaya, a local authority that held wide ranging administrative powers during the development of the garden city.

Most pertinent among all his achievements is Datuk Zainuddin’s wide recognition as the force behind the creation of Putrajaya’s Total Planning and Development Doctrine which is based on the trinity relationship of “Man and his Creator”, “Man and Man” and “Man and Nature.” Much has been said about this doctrine which aimed to ensure sustainability in the development of the city from the beginning to end. It also coincided with Tun Dr Mahathir’s desire to have Putrajaya developed into smart garden city that is a paradise to all.

TAN SRI SAMSUDIN OSMAN

Second President of Perbadanan Putrajaya

Unlike his predecessor, Tan Sri Samsudin Osman’s tenure as the second president of Perbadanan Putrajaya Corporation began in a rather unusual manner. The event unfolded in 2004 when Tan Sri Samsudin, in his capacity as Chief Secretary to the Government at that time, was scheduled to meet the then Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to discuss the new Perbadanan Putrajaya presidential candidate following the unfortunate and untimely demise of Tun Azizan.

During an interview for this book, Tan Sri Samsudin took a walk down memory lane and revealed: “I had a few potential candidates on my mind but before the opportunity to air my thoughts arose, Tun Abdullah caught me off guard by saying that he wanted me to take over the prestigious post.”

The change of leadership at Perbadanan Putrajaya happened at a critical juncture. Development at the site was progressing like a well-oiled machine and the government felt that it was imperative that a competent, charismatic and experienced administrator took over the reins to avoid any delays and ensure a smooth continuation of work. Tan Sri Samsudin was the perfect candidate as he fitted all the criteria to a tee.

Tan Sri Samsudin took to his new job like fish to water and managed to successfully maintain continuity in all the projects on site that were previously handled by the late Tun Azizan. Thanks to his vast management skills, not a single project under Perbadanan Putrajaya was delayed during his tenure that spanned the period covering both the 8th Malaysia Plan and 9th Malaysia Plan.

Recalling the good old days, Tan Sri Samsudin said he was fortunate to inherit an impeccable administrative structure at Perbadanan Putrajaya from Tun Azizan as well as receive the full cooperation of capable staff members from many related entities that included those from government departments as well as private companies.

At the same time, he saw first-hand the passion and relentless pursuit of excellence possessed by those who were involved in the development Putrajaya. He was in awe after noticing that the culture of working late into the night had become second nature to a vast majority. On top of that, many were willing to leave the comforts of their homes and scour every possible corner of the world in search of outstanding ideas that could be incorporated into plans to make Putrajaya even more special in every sense of the word.

Apart from overseeing the physical development of the buildings and parks, he also placed emphasis on creating a sense of fun and vibrancy in Putrajaya by organizing various well attended functions and popular sporting events. Despite his hectic schedule, Tan Sri Samsudin was constantly mindful of fulfilling the needs and ensuring the comfort of his main clients who were civil servants who would be working and living in the city once it was ready. In this aspect, everything received his undivided attention, right down to nitty gritty details like ensuring that there was sufficient parking space for all.

Among Tan Sri Samsudin’s many notable achievements that are remembered to this very day is his success in reorganising the employment structure that gave more benefits and stability to Perbadanan Putrajaya staff members. Thanks to his prompt effort that was conducted in accordance with established regulations, their employment status was made permanent and pensionable.



The Xth President of Putrajaya Corporation Datuk Dr. Aminuddin (L) and his predecessor, the 2nd president, Tan Sri Samsudin Osman, Putrajaya Lake, September 2019.

Presiden Perbadanan Putrajaya, Datuk Seri Hasim Ismail berucap di hari penutup Festival Floria Diraja Putrajaya 2016. NSTP/MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

DATUK SRI HASIM ISMAIL

Fourth President of Perbadanan Putrajaya

As an experienced administrator, Datuk Seri Hasim Ismail took his work at Perbadanan Putrajaya so seriously that he eventually became attached to the city itself at a personal level. His love and passion for Putrajaya were so intense that he decided to immortalise his feelings for all eternity in the lyrics of the city's theme song titled Putrajaya Mempersona (Fascinating Putrajaya). Unwilling to part with the city even after retirement, he chose to remain and called it home.

Revealing his thoughts during an interview, Datuk Seri Hasim said: "I fell head over heels with the serene surroundings and scenic beauty of Putrajaya. There was never a moment of hesitation in my heart to build a house here to enjoy my golden years amidst such beauty and tranquillity."

Viewing himself as part of the community, he did not see his role in Putrajaya as one that was purely administrative. Above the many tasks at hand, he was resolute in his intention to ensure that the people living there were truly happy and had a share in the prosperity brought about by the city.

As a pious and god fearing man, Datuk Seri Hasim not only aspired for Putrajaya residents to achieve excellence during their time on earth but also in the hereafter. In order to pursue this noble intention, he constantly made it a point to mingle freely with members of the community when attending dawn and evening prayers at the surau. His unassuming ways went a long way in helping residents voice their thoughts and concerns without reservations. In order to further this agenda, Datuk Seri Hasim set the ball rolling for the establishment of the Masyarakat Sejahtera Putrajaya (Putrajaya Prosperous Society) blueprint which is a collaboration between Perbadanan Putrajaya and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The plan provided guidelines for the creation of a wholesome society that put into practice various noble values to help achieve both physical and spiritual happiness.

Besides that, Datuk Seri Hasim is also noted for his emphasis on making the city safe. Thanks to his untiring efforts, the latest technology such as CCTV and panic buttons at public places have been employed to improve emergency response times for the public.

It was also during his tenure that exciting new products were introduced to boost domestic and international tourism within Putrajaya. Among the tourism packages that were actively promoted were architectural appreciation trails, cycling paths and walking tracks. In order to attract returning visitors, Datuk Seri Hasim made sure that all the infrastructure, building facades, amenities, landscapes and the lake were kept clean and constantly well maintained.

While elaborating on his emphasis for cleanliness, Datuk Seri Hasim said: "I once challenged the Perbadanan Putrajaya staff to prove that the waterways within the city boundaries are free from impurities by finding me a fighting fish as that species is known to only survive in places with clean water." "I was not the least surprised when they managed to find the fish thriving in abundance in the wetlands. One fine specimen was caught as proof and it remains in my room as an adopted pet," he said with a twinkle in his eye.

On a more serious note, Datuk Seri Hasim was constantly mindful that his administrative path was fraught with various challenges. As a result, he made it a point to remind all Perbadanan Putrajaya employees that the only way to move forward and better themselves was to abide strictly by the rules and regulations while learning from past experiences.

When asked to sum up his thoughts for the city, he paused momentarily before saying that the joy of serving in Putrajaya was very personal and rather difficult to describe as he was not only an administrator during his tenure but was also very closely in touch with the residents and served them in every way possible.

TAN SRI ASEH CHE MAT

Third President of Perbadanan Putrajaya

Tan Sri Aseh Che Mat made it his singular purpose to make sure that the dream of making Putrajaya the best federal government administrative centre was realised when he took office as the president of Perbadanan Putrajaya on August 1, 2012. In keeping with that purpose, he quickly put in place a series of achievement benchmarks for Perbadanan Putrajaya employees and made it clear that only the best would be accepted throughout the development progress of the city.

During an interview for this book, he was quoted as saying: “While considering cleanliness, we made sure that Putrajaya achieved the highest standard possible in that segment. The same went with beautification aspects as no efforts were spared to make Putrajaya the envy of all in terms of attractiveness and architectural grandeur.”

Achieving lofty goals

For Tan Sri Aseh, only the best was reserved for Putrajaya throughout its development and, as a result, everyone agreed that it is the best administrative centre that has ever been built when measured in terms of all its targeted qualitative and quantitative parameters. “To me, the inability to achieve those lofty goals would mean that the hard work invested to make Putrajaya a reality was all in vain,” he shared.

Realising that the development of Putrajaya was an ongoing journey, Tan Sri Aseh made sure that things continued as planned when he first took over the reigns as president of Perbadanan Putrajaya. At the same time, he also took steps to incorporate improvements into the various segments that he thought were lacking. All these were done with the singular aim of making sure that the original plan of setting up Putrajaya as a modern city of the future was achieved.

Tan Sri Aseh met up regularly with Tun Dr Mahathir who was the main visionary for Putrajaya to gain his views and insights on the ongoing developments concerning the city. While recalling one of the meet ups, he said: “The lake and boulevard were the two features that mattered most to Tun Dr Mahathir. He wanted Putrajaya to have a scenic and clean lake that could be fully appreciated by visitors on boat cruises. At the same time, the Prime Minister wanted the boulevard to be a vibrant venue for all sorts of interesting activities that could be enjoyed by the residents as well as tourists.”

Housing for employees

Among the major achievements of Tan Sri Aseh that are still fondly remembered by the employees of Perbadanan Putrajaya and the residents of the city is the provision for residential quarters for government servants.

On this, Tan Sri Aseh shared views on this proud achievement by saying: “During the process of pre-empting foreseeable problems, it suddenly dawned upon me that there were 14,500 government employees who were still waiting in line for their own residential quarters. Coincidentally, the government at that time had just launched a housing project for all Malaysians called Perumahan Rakyat 1Malaysia (PR1MA). Using that as a template, I managed to make the government agree to a similar housing scheme for public servants which was aptly named Perumahan Penjawat Awam 1 Malaysia (PPA1MA).”

The decision was made to develop no less than 20,000 residential units with about 12,500 units built at the first stage. Built on land that was given free by the government who also heavily subsidised the construction costs, the dream of owning their first property soon became reality for those who took the trouble to hand in their applications. This program that was first mooted by Tan Sri Aseh became so popular that it was eventually expanded throughout the nation.

It was also under the leadership of Tan Sri Aseh that Perbadanan Putrajaya began establishing subsidiaries to efficiently manage projects under its purview like private companies. While implementing this novel idea, Tan Sri Aseh drew on his past experiences as chairman of a government linked company (GLC) as well as director of some private companies. Among the achievements were the establishment of Putrajaya International Conference Centre and Putrajaya Cruise management entities.

Personal involvement

During Tan Sri Aseh’s tenure, Perbadanan Putrajaya made the decision to take over the maintenance of the residential quarters which were previously handled by the Public Works Department. Apart from inculcating a strong sense of appreciation among the residents for the facilities they used daily such as the lifts as they themselves would be directly involved in the upkeep, this move also developed keen commitment among the people of Putrajaya and strengthened their bond with the city they all called home.

In line with that, Tan Sri Aseh aspired for the Perbadanan Putrajaya employees to be directly involved in the upkeep of the city. This involvement extended well beyond the ordinary working hours and employees were encouraged to become committee members of their own residential estate associations and help look into various matters including the maintenance of facilities and general cleanliness.

Vibrant city

Tan Sri Aseh also organised a plethora of activities in Putrajaya to make it a vibrant city that received a constant stream of visitors. In terms of maximising exposure for the events organised, he made full use of his contacts to make sure that they were attended by notable dignitaries including the sultans and foreign diplomats.

While fondly reminiscing the moment when he first learnt about his appointment as the president of Perbadanan Putrajaya, Tan Sri Aseh admitted that he saw himself at that very moment as someone faced with a rather serious dilemma. At that time, he was active in the private sector and realised that major sacrifices had to be made should he decide to head Perbadanan Putrajaya.

At the end, Tan Sri Aseh took up the challenge as his love and willingness to serve the nation far outweighed the things that were important to him at a personal level. “To me, the task at hand was of utmost importance as those who held the post before me were very capable and respected leaders. That made me feel honoured and grateful to be considered for such an important undertaking,” he added with pride in his voice.



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Reflecting back on those early years with profound fondness, one pioneer staff recalled a hilarious moment that took place when Tun Azizan surveyed the construction site from a higher elevation together with his invited guest from Switzerland. Barely able to contain his excitement and to the bewilderment of his foreign companion, Tun Azizan began pointing out various key locations earmarked for future developments. After he had finished rattling off names of major buildings and pointed out the place where the four-kilometre long boulevard was going to be built, his guest chuckled and said that he had no inkling of what was being said. His remark comes as no surprise as Putrajaya at that time was nothing more than just several pieces of vacant land surrounded by large tracts of rubber and oil palm plantations.

Nevertheless, the incident clearly demonstrated Tun Azizan’s eagerness and impatience to show off Putrajaya’s great potential even at a time when there was not much to be seen. Taking cue from Tun Azizan’s enthusiasm, the rest of the Perbadanan Putrajaya staff members were equally proud to be part of the important national project and spared no effort in making it a resounding success. No hurdle was too difficult to surmount for everyone at Perbadanan Putrajaya and working beyond the normal office hours, sometimes late into the night, became nothing out of the ordinary for many of them. Then, just a little more than two years after Tun Dr Mahathir declared Putrajaya as a Federal Territory, the spanking new Federal Government Administrative Centre was given the honour of hosting the National Day celebrations on August 31, 2003.

Initially, there were concerns regarding the city’s readiness to organize the important national level event. Even the Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism Tan Sri Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir aired scepticism during a site visit about a month before the planned event. Feeling that there was still much to be done, he turned to a Perbadanan Putrajaya employee and said: “Are you sure Putrajaya can handle this? Be frank and tell me if the city is ready to host the event or not?”

The words made everyone realise the gravity of the situation. Since the decision to host the National Day event was a Ministerial Cabinet directive, all parties involved including Perbadanan Putrajaya, Putrajaya Holdings and all the other appointed contractors made it their sole purpose to rise up to the challenge. No expense was spared to have Putrajaya ready by the time the nation celebrated the 46th anniversary of Independence.



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14. Views from Above

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HARI WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN | FEDERAL TERRITORY DAY

I FEBRUARY 2020 Edition One

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NEW STRAITS TIMES PRESS Mustapha Kamil Mohd Janor, Datuk Seri Abdul Jalil Hamid, Jeannie Leong, Azizi Othman, Mohammad Anis Abdullah. **En Azizi to confirm.**

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REFERENCE Prime Minister's Department, Speech Text Archive; Parliament of Malaysia, Hansard Archive; Interview with Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad; Interview with Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid; Interview with Tan Sri Samsudin Osman; Interview with Dato' Prof. Zainuddin Muhammad; Interview with Datuk Houd Sirat; Interview with Datuk Seri Jebasingam Issace John; Interview with Datuk Shahoran Johan Ariffin; Interview with Datuk Haji Muhamad Haitamin Ishak; Interwith with Puan Norhazifa Mohamed; Putrajaya A Living Landscape, Perbadanan Putrajaya; Pembinaan Putrajaya Perpektif Pemaju, Putrajaya Holdings Sdn Bhd; Putrajaya The Federal Government Administrative Centre, Perbadanan Putrajaya; Ahmad Sarji, Attaining Eminence, Lim Chang Moh; The Quintessential Man, The Story of Tan Sri Azizan Zainul Abidin; Author Azam Aris; Putrajaya Administrative Centre of Malaysia Planning Concept and Implementation, Chin Siong Ho, Faculty of Built Environment (FAB), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia; Putrajaya, Review of The Masterplan, Perbadanan Putrajaya; Putrajaya New Town and the Quality of Life, Dasimah Omar, Built Environmental Journal Vol. 4, No. 1, 1-9, 2007.

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This book, with fascinating stories and eye-catching images, details the development of Putrajaya, Malaysia's federal government administrative centre, from the time it was known as Prang Besar and its subsequent development to the present day. Twenty-five years have passed since the first foundation stone was laid, Putrajaya has today become Malaysia's national symbols of prosperity and splendour. A city from scratch, Putrajaya epitomises Malaysia's vision to create a new administrative centre that is capable of meeting the challenges of the new millennium as well as propel the country into an era where information technology plays a central role in national development. In fact, it would not be considered excessive to consider Putrajaya as one of the best achievements made by Malaysia since achieving Merdeka in 1957. This book is intended to give the general reader an overview of the history of Putrajaya, much of it difficult to obtain from a single source.

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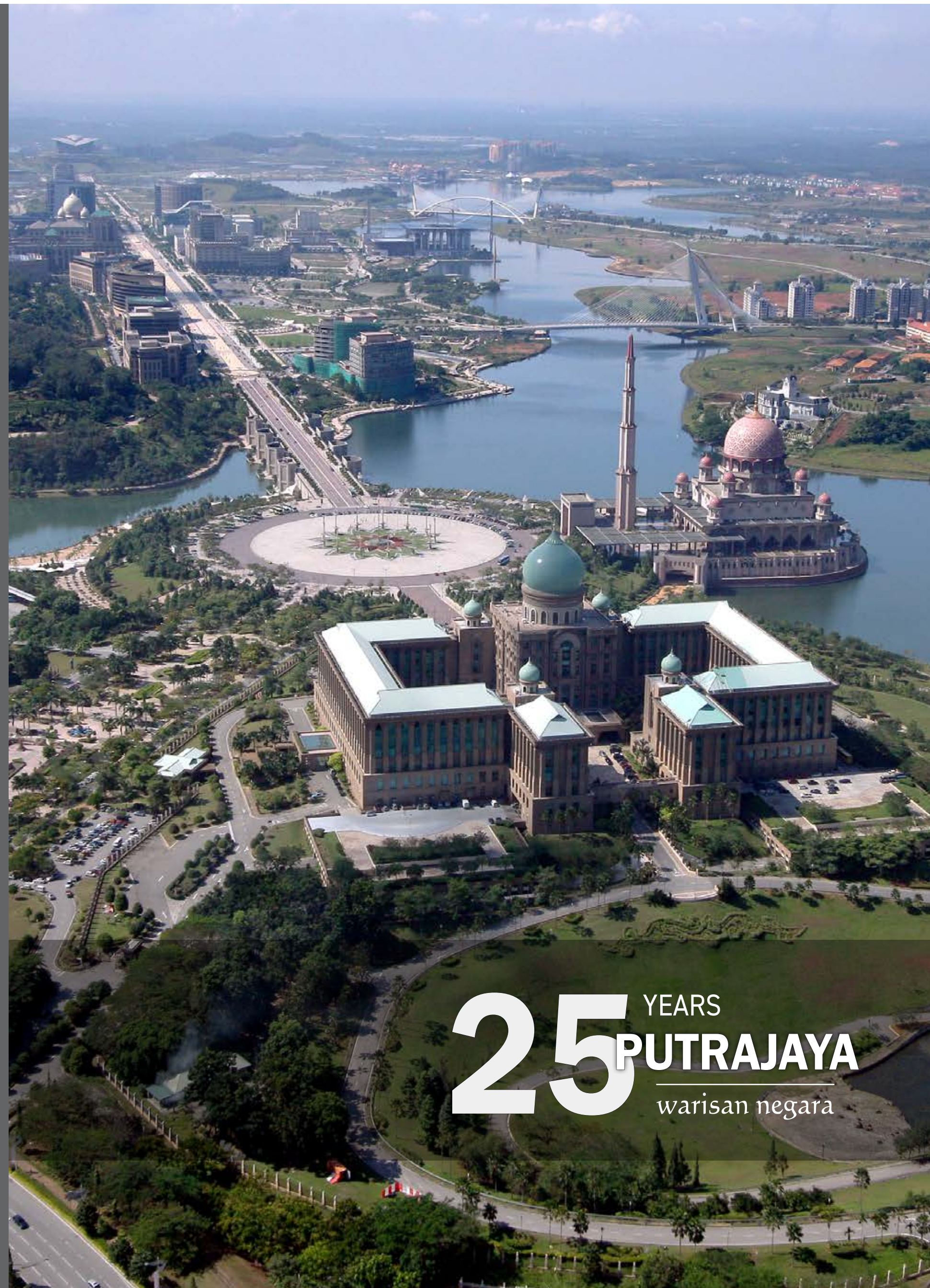


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PUTRAJAYA 25 YEARS

warisan negara



25 YEARS
PUTRAJAYA
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