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PUTRAJAYA, Malaysia Sept 26 (NNN-Bernama) -- Malaysia will house Southeast Asia's largest meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) venue here following the combination of the Malaysia Exposition and Convention Centre (MyExpo) and existing Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC) by 2021.

When officiating the groundbreaking ceremony of MyExpo at Precint 5 in the nation's administrative capital today, Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak said the convention centre with a total gross floor area of 1.5 million square feet (sq ft) would be the largest exhibition centre in Malaysia upon completion in 2020.

MyExpo, which features unique design and can accommodate 60,000 people at a time, had projected a total annual revenue of RM500 million, he said.

"As such, when MyExpo opens its doors in 2021, it will not only contribute to a rise in the number of visitors to our country but also create more jobs and strengthen Malaysia's economic growth.

"This will help make Putrajaya a city that truly caters for both business and leisure, not only for local residents but also as the host to other nationals who are expected to live and work here," he said.

MyExpo is the first phase development of the MyExpo City at the Diplomatic and Integrated Mixed Development enclave.

The new site of MyExpo City is located adjacent to PICC and the project is expected to complement and bring a new breath to PICC that caters

mainly to conference, congress and convention since 2013.

Najib who is also the Finance Minister said MyExpo City which covers four million sq ft would include parks and four- and five-star hotels.

He said the MICE sector was a rapidly growing part of the global tourism industry in which Malaysia's MICE industry attracted 111,298 delegates to 153 events and generated RM1.035 billion in revenue last year.

By 2020, business tourism was forecast to contribute RM3.9 billion to Gross National Income and generate 16,700 jobs, he said.

"All of which will make MyExpo not only an iconic establishment but a key attraction as a destination for conferences and exhibitions, nationally, regionally and internationally," he said while commending those participating in its planning, construction and development.

Najib added that the International Congress and Convention Association, Kuala Lumpur is ranked eighth in the Asia Pacific and 28th globally as a convention centre city, while among countries, Malaysia was ranked seventh in the region and 30th in the world.

Also present were Federal Territories Minister, Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor and Putrajaya Corporation President and Putrajaya Leisures and Services Group Sdn Bhd (PULSE Group) Chairman, Hasim Ismail.

MyExpo will be managed by Convention and Exhibition (Putrajaya) Sdn Bhd which currently manages PICC.

MyExpo City is a development project by PULSE Group, a holding company wholly-owned by Putrajaya Corporation and also the investment arm for development in Putrajaya. -- NNN-BERNAMA