



**PUBLIC AWARENESS TOWARDS ISTANA BUDAYA AS A CENTRE OF
TOURISTS ATTRACTION**

(PROPOSAL)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

History of Istana Budaya begin with the idea of this theatre proposed in 1964 to establish a cultural centre in Kuala Lumpur was submitted by then Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Ministry of Cultural and Social Welfare. The construction work began in 1995 and was completed three years later. It was built at a cost of RM210 million with a theatre floor area of 21,000 m² as part of the 54,400 m² cultural complex. The Istana Budaya was officially opened in 1999 by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. Upon completion, the former national theatre, *Panggung Negara* was relocated to this new building. Istana Budaya is the home of the National Theatre Company and the National Symphony Orchestra and choir. Istana Budaya located at Jalan Tun Razak, Titiwangsa, 50694 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur.

The Istana Budaya main theatre hall *Panggung Sari*, with its unique design of royal boxes inspired by the windows of the traditional *Rumah Melayu* or Malay house, can accommodate up to 1,412 audiences at a time. Istana Budaya is also rated among the ten most sophisticated theatres in the world, and on par with the Royal Albert Hall in London. Istana Budaya aims to raise the standards of performing arts, develop artistic excellence in theatre, popularize with high-quality theatre productions and develop a higher sense of artistic appreciation.

Istana Budaya was mooted during National Cultural Congress in 1971 as a Malaysian art discourse. Its establishment was advanced by the establishment of National Cultural Group (KBN) in 1972 under jurisdiction of Ministry of Cultural, Youth and Sports. In 1973, KBN were moving from Jalan Ampang to National Culture Complex at Jalan Tun Ismail that focuses its activities professionally in traditional dance and music. Istana Budaya can be proud of as the first theatre in Asia that has sophisticated stage mechanism for theatre performance.

The design of this building was based on Malay culture. The cabinet has approved the abolishment of National Theatre (*Panggung Negara*) to ISTANA BUDAYA officially in 2000.

Vision

To be a reputable stage performing art in Malaysia with a world-class status.

Mission

Developing an artistic excellent in stage performing art.

Objective

The objective of establishment of this musicians group is to accompany the dancing and Aristana performance locally and internationally and to be part of performances in government official functions attended by world dignitaries. The group is also promoting Malaysia through its traditional music while performing in official function.

Structure of Istana Budaya

Designed by local architect, Muhammad Kamar Ya'akub, Istana Budaya is one of Kuala Lumpur's most striking structures due to its turquoise-blue tiled roof – the 'folds' remind one of a giant origami piece. As in a traditional Malay house, the theatre is divided into three areas which is the 'serambi' (lobby and foyer), the 'rumah ibu' (auditorium) and the 'rumah dapur' (stage or rehearsal hall). The main building takes the shape of the 'sireh junjung'. 'sireh junjung' is a traditional betel leaf arrangements used during Malay weddings and welcoming ceremonies with the foyer claiming the spot as the theatre's most intricately designed aspect. Additionally, the main theatre hall (Panggung Sari) which can accommodate up to 1,412 people is a classic opera house with a twist and its royal boxes open up like traditional Malay-style windows.

Logo of Istana Budaya



Figure 1.1: Logo of Istana Budaya