

# Labuan allowed to decay

LABUAN can be developed as envisaged by Tun Dr Mahathir when he made Labuan a Federal Territory in 1984. However, despite the 40 years and with all the power and funds, the Federal Government failed to make Labuan an International Island City.

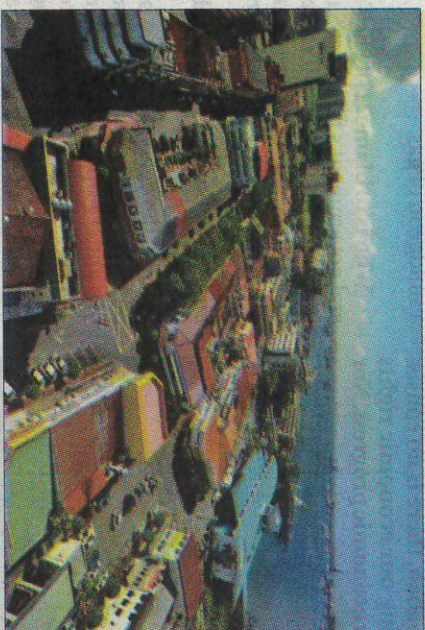
It is a foregone conclusion and the chances of Labuan becoming an International Island City is as likely as the day "Kuching Bertanduk" (the day cats develop horns).

The only significant improvement is some infrastructure and the increase in Malaysian Malay Civil Servants that dramatically jumped from 100 when Labuan was under Sabah to over 4,000 today.

Government Departments have increased at least four times. An example is the Land and Survey department which under Federal has four departments. All headed by Malaysian Malays.

There was no establishment of any building that the people of Labuan can be proud of. The never ending talk of a bridge between Labuan and mainland has remained a figment of every Prime Minister's imagination (or lack of).

The only imagination from the Federal Government is



the changing of the Chief Executive Officer of Labuan Corporation every three years – that is all.

In a recent announcement, the Federal Government approved the building of "the" bridge at a cost of RM5/RM6 billion. The contract has apparently been awarded. It is reported the bridge will first go to Pulau

Dat and then to Mempakul (Sabah). Pulau Dat was approved for oil and gas storage at least twice, and has been abandoned time and again. Reason being Pulau Dat is surrounded by shallow and muddy water and therefore not suitable for the oil and gas industry.

Furthermore it would spoil the beauty of Labuan Island. The bridge should be built directly from Labuan's East Coast to the mainland of Sabah with Commercial and Housing at both ends of the Bridge.

It will create a land mark that Labuan desperately needs just like many bridges around the world, particularly in China.

However, if this is the planning by so-called experts (or lack of) from Malaya, then Labuan will become a "slum area" just like many "kampongs" and another repeat of "Patau Patau" in Labuan.

The people of Labuan need to be mindful of any development plan that destroys the image of Labuan as a "Fantastic Island".

**Ag. Jambul**