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Stadium Merdeka Set To Reopen Its Doors On 17 August

This historic venue, once the beating heart of Malaysia's independence, is ready to reclaim its rightful place in the hearts of its people.



BY FERNANDO FONG (https://www.therakyatpost.com/author/fernando/) JULY 23, 2024 <u>(https://www/itugestodstodepercetorstodepe</u>



stories and updates.

Nestled in the heart of the Merdeka 118 precinct, a sleeping giant is about to awaken.

Stadium Merdeka, the iconic venue that witnessed Malaysia's birth as an independent nation, will reopen its doors on 17 August after a long period of restoration and revitalization.

For many Malaysians, Stadium Merdeka has been a distant memory, a relic of a bygone era.

Despite its immense historical significance, the stadium has largely been forgotten, overshadowed by the country's rapid development and modernization—however, all that is about to change.



This is an aerial view of Stadium Merdeka, a beacon of Malaysia's past and future standing tall amidst the urban landscape of Kuala Lumpur. (Pix: Fernando Fong)

Guardians of Heritage: Stadium Merdeka's Meticulous Restoration and Revival

PNB Merdeka Ventures, the custodian of this national treasure, has been working tirelessly to restore the stadium to its former glory.

Liza Karim, Head of Communications at PNB Merdeka Ventures Sdn Bhd (PNBMV), expressed the company's pride in announcing the reopening of Stadium Merdeka, stating, "This iconic venue, a symbol of our nation's heritage, has been meticulously restored to its 1957 state to ensure it remains a place of pride for all Malaysians."

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Workers meticulously restore the hallowed grounds of Stadium Merdeka. In the background, the towering Merdeka 118 symbolises Malaysia's progress, a striking contrast to the stadium's timeless charm. (Pix: Fernando Fong)

The stadium's iconic shell roof, the longest dual-direction cantilevered structure in Southeast Asia in 1957, has been painstakingly restored to its former glory.

The seating terraces have been returned to their original capacity of 20,000 seats, while the display board has been reconstructed to its original form.

Even the floor tiles at the main entrance have been restored to their 1957 state, ensuring visitors will be transported back in time as they step into this hallowed ground.

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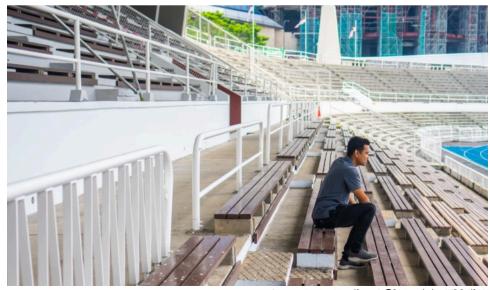


Stepping into the Past: The traditional floor tiles at Stadium Merdeka, meticulously restored to their original 1957 design, transport visitors to a bygone era of classic elegance and craftsmanship. (Pix: Fernando Fong)

As Stadium Merdeka prepares to reopen, it is not just a celebration of the past but also a promise of a brighter future.

The stadium will once again become a hub of activity, hosting sporting events, cultural celebrations, and community gatherings.

It will be a place where Malaysians from all walks of life can unite, united by a shared sense of pride and belonging.



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Pride

The reopening of Stadium Merdeka is not just about preserving a piece of history; it is about reigniting the spirit of a nation.

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The expansive space of Stadium Merdeka's porch, with its sweeping arches and timeless architecture, has been the backdrop for countless moments of anticipation and celebration. (Pix: Fernando Fong)

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The Sultan of Selangor's Cup (TSSC), an annual friendly football match, will be the first event to grace the newly restored Stadium Merdeka on 17 August.

This symbolic gesture reminds us of the stadium's rich sporting heritage and role in bringing people together.

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A Nation's Resolve: The Remarkable Construction of Stadium Merdeka

As Malaysians prepare to step into Stadium Merdeka once more, they will be walking in the footsteps of their forefathers, those who witnessed the birth of a nation on that fateful day in 1957.

Constructed in just 11 months, Stadium Merdeka was a marvel of modern engineering when it opened its doors the same year.

At that time, it was the biggest stadium in Southeast Asia.

The stadium, the brainchild of Tan Sri Stanley Edward Jewkes, the Director of the Public Works Department of Malaya, was built using 160 architectural design drawings, 200,000 tonnes of earth removed, 10,000 tonnes of concrete, and 700 tonnes of steel reinforcement.

The result was a structure ahead of its time, a testament to the ingenuity and determination of a young nation on the cusp of independence.

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Through the Lens of History: A photographer traverses the hallowed turf of Stadium Merdeka, capturing the essence of a nation's soul. The restored scoreboard, adorned with the emblems of Malaya's states, stands as a silent guardian of the stadium's rich heritage. (Pix: Fernando Fong)

From Merdeka to World Stage: Stadium Merdeka's Iconic Past and Triumphant Return

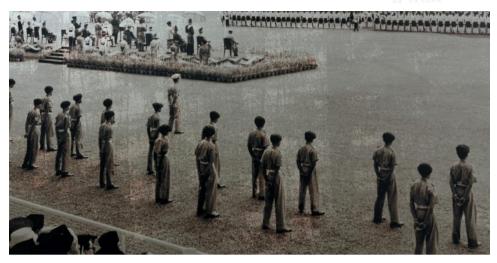
On 31 August 1957, Stadium Merdeka witnessed a defining moment in Malaysia's history.

It was here that the Malayan flag was raised for the first time, signalling the birth of a new nation.

The stadium's capacity crowd of 20,000 people watched in awe as Tunku Abdul Rahman, the country's first Prime Minister, declared Malaya's independence, echoing through the stands and across the nation.

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Frozen in Time: A nostalgic black and white photograph displayed within the walls of Stadium Merdeka transports viewers back to the fateful day of 31 August 1957. (Pix: Fernando Fong)

Over the years, Stadium Merdeka has hosted numerous other significant events, from the 1965 Southeast Asian Peninsular Games to the 1975 World Cup qualifier between Malaysia and Japan.

The same year, legendary boxer Muhammad Ali fought against European Champion Joe Bugner at Stadium Merdeka, which became a focal point in Malaysia then.

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Muhammad Ali retained his world heavyweight title with a unanimous 15- round decision over Joe Bugner in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia #OnThisDay in 1975.
In his third title defenses within 400 days. All and used the 00 days a back

In his third title defence within 100 days, Ali endured the 90-degree heat before about 10,000 spectators in outdoor Merdeka Stadium.

"Tired," said Ali. "Too hot. The heat was bad. But we both had to fight in it."... See more

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It was a significant event that left a lasting impression on the country.

However, as time passed and the country grew and developed, the stadium began to fade from the public consciousness, its glory days seemingly consigned to the annals of history.

But now, thanks to the tireless efforts of PNB Merdeka Ventures, the custodian of this national treasure, Stadium Merdeka is ready to reclaim its rightful place in Malaysians' hearts.

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