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Gates-Multimedia

GATES TO MAKE APPEARANCE AT MULTIMEDIA ASIA `96

KUALA LUMPUR, July 20 (Bernama) -- Microsoft founder Bill Gates will make a special appearance via video conferencing at the Multimedia Asia `96 which will be opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Aug 1.

Malaysian Institute of Microelectronic Systems (Mimos) Director-General Datuk Dr Tengku Azzman Shariffadeen said Gates will appear for about 30 minutes in a video conference beamed from Seattle to join a panel discussion chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) here.

The discussion, titled "Critical Success Factors for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC)", would focus on what decision-makers foresaw in creating success stories in the MSC, he said at a news conference at the Mimos headquarters here today.

It is to be held on the first day of the Multimedia Super Corridor Exposition and Conference.

Gates' scheduled appearance showed his confidence and anticipation of the potential success of the MSC, which is expected to be a regional, if not the world's hub for information technology (IT) infrastructure, Tengku Azzman said.

The MSC, the brainchild of the Prime Minister, upon completion will cover an area 15km by 40km connecting the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang, Kuala Lumpur City Centre and the new administrative capital Putrajaya.

Other international panellists at the four-day conference include Dr Kenichi Ohmae, an internationally known IT consultant and advisor of the conference main organizer, National Information Technology Council (NITC).

Digital Domain president and chief executive officer Scott Ross will make a special multimedia presentation, also on the first day of the conference.

Other sessions include a discussion on "The East Asian Electronic Community" to be chaired by Energy, Telecommunications and Post Minister Datuk Leo Moggie and "Investors' Expectations of the MSC," to be chaired by Finance Ministry Secretary-General Tan Sri Clifford Herbert.

Institute of Strategic and International Studies (Isis) Director-General Datuk Noordin Sopiee will chair a discussion on "Socio-cultural Dimensions of the Global Multimedia Community" while Economic Planning Unit Director-General Tan Sri Ali Abul Hassan will chair one on "Implications of the Emerging Digital Economy."

Multimedia Asia `96 will also feature an exposition of Multimedia Applications and Products, open for businesses on the first three days and the public on the last day.

Steven Thong, general manager of exposition organiser Reed Exhibition Companies, said it will be an opportunity for the 150 local and international companies to introduce their unique IT application products and ideas which will be suitable for development in the MSC.

Dr Mahathir said Multimedia Asia '96 was designed to encourage multimedia leaders to be partners in the development of Malaysia's MSC.

"I welcome your participation in Multimedia Asia `96, to build relationships, create opportunities, and help in the success of the Malaysian Multimedia Super Corridor," he said in a message in the Multimedia Asia `96 information brochure.

"Within this area (MSC), a multimedia/IT catalyst centre will be located. Worldclass multimedia corporations will be invited to locate their business units and R&D facilities centre serving as a springboard to regional and world markets for multimedia products and services," he said.

Advanced and efficient high-technology was vital to propel the country as one of the leading economies in the Asia Pacific region in the 21st century, he said.

"Designated as a high priority strategic sector under the Seventh Malaysia Plan, the development of a multimedia/IT industry hub should enable Malaysia to play a more effective role in the context of a global information economy," he said. -- BERNAMA

RAZ NI YBY