

28/07/1997

A quantum leap in Smart partnerships

Lokman Mansor

THE third Langkawi International Dialogue (LID '97), which opens today till Thursday, represents a quantum leap in Smart partnerships beyond the expectations of even its organisers.

Smart partnership is a new approach to business practice based on a partnership among Government, business and the workforce nationally and internationally for enhancing equitable growth based on prosper-thy-neighbour and win-win principles.

LID '97 International Advisory Council joint chairman Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli said where LID '95 and LID '96 dwelled on the definition of Smart partnerships, this year's dialogue has progressed to focus on concrete examples of Smart partnerships in action.

"We will be focussing on four major areas - company-to-company cooperation, cross-border cooperative frameworks, technology for emerging economies, and the application of technology in financial services," he said.

Briefing the press in Langkawi yesterday, Tajudin said at least 25 examples of Smart partnerships will be presented to the participants at LID '97.

"What we are looking at in this dialogue is the sharing of experiences, but of course these have to be applied to their particular environments," he said.

Tajudin said of particular interest to participants from Southern Africa is Malaysia's experience in privatization, where government agencies have been successfully privatized without displacing employees, and yet managed to improve their productivity and efficiency.

"We also have a bigger group this year. We had anticipated 250 participants (the same as LID '96), but some 350 have responded that they will be coming to LID '97," Tajudin added.

These include heads of government and business leaders from Australia, Botswana, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Denmark, France, Ghana, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, UK, Uganda, the US and Zimbabwe.

LID '97 is organised by the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management Ltd and the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology.

The theme for LID '97 is "Smart Partnership in Action". The opening keynote address will be delivered by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight, while Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim will present his keynote address tomorrow night.

In addition to the dialogue and interactive sessions, LID '97 will also provide special closed sessions for heads of state and invited participants.

The first, to be moderated by Dr Mahathir tomorrow, is expected to focus on privatization, and Smart partnerships in the context of Malaysia's multi-party system.

"The new concept of Asean countries working together to stabilise regional currencies is another example of Smart partnership which the Prime Minister may talk about, if he is asked," Tajudin added.

The second special closed session for heads of state will be moderated by Anwar tomorrow afternoon, and is expected to discuss the participation of the private sector in Malaysia's Budget process.

The third special closed session on Wednesday will be moderated by Economic Adviser to the Government Tun Daim Zainuddin, who is expected to share his experience in the development of growth areas.

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