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Mahathir-IAP (including full list of IAP members)
INFOTECH INDUSTRY LUMINARIES AGREE TO ADVISE ON MSC

By: Salmy Hashim

LOS ANGELES, Jan 14 (Bernama) -- Twenty-five leaders in the information technology industry worldwide have agreed to be members of the International Advisory Panel (IAP) formed by Malaysia to guide the development of its Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

The 30-member panel will be chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and includes household names like Bill Gates of Microsoft, the world's largest software manufacturer.

The inaugural IAP meeting will be held on Thursday at Stanford University near San Francisco.

The meeting will be hosted by two other IAP members, Dean Michael Spence and Prof William Miller of Stanford, the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) announced in a statement here today.

The other members of the panel are MDC executive chairman Tan Sri Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah, world-renowned information technology consultant Kenichi Ohmae, EDS Corporation chairman, president and chief executive officer (CEO) Lester Albertal, Apple Computer chairman and CEO Gilbert Amelio, Netscape Communications Corp president and CEO James Barksdale, Silicon Graphics World Trade Corporation chairman Robert R. Bishop;

Center for Strategic and International Studies senior advisor Ambassador Diana Lady Dougan, Oracle Corporation president and CEO Larry Ellison, Bechtel Group Inc vice-chairman Fred Gluck, Sony Corporation president Nobuyuki Idei, Lucky-Goldstar Group chairman Bon Moo Koo, Madge Networks chairman and CEO Robert Madge, Nets Inc chairman, president and CEO Jim Manzi, Sun Microsystems Inc chairman, president and CEO Scott McNealy, Nippon Telephone and Telegraph (NTT) senior executive vice-president Noboru Miyawaki, BDM International president, CEO and director Philip Odeen;

Compaq Computers president and CEO Eckhard Pfeiffer, Hewlett-Packard chairman, president and CEO Lewis Platt, Acer Group chairman and CEO Stan Shih, Softbank president and CEO Masayoshi Son, Motorola chairman Gary Tooker, BCE chairman, president and CEO Lynton Ronald Wilson, IBM CEO Louis Gerstner, Siemens Corporation chairman Dr Heinrich von Pierer, Fujitsu president Tadashi Sekizawa and Toffler and Associates founder Alvin Toffler.

Five members -- Gates, Gerstner, Von Pierer, Sekizawa, and Toffler -- have indicated their inability to attend Thursday's meeting.

However, their absence will not detract from what is expected to be a historic gathering in one room of so many of the most powerful figures in the information technology industry.

It will be a unique opportunity for them to contribute towards shaping an ideal environment for the growth of multimedia industries anywhere in the world.

MDC chief operating officer Dr Mohamed Arif Nun said the Prime Minister will be "doing more listening than talking" to allow members to fully participate in shaping the final form of the MSC.

He said it is envisaged that the meeting will be held annually and the next one will be in Kuala Lumpur. More members may be added to the panel after another MDC mission to Europe in April.

Dr Mohamed Arif said the MDC hoped between 20 and 30 companies represented by the IAP members would eventually invest in the MSC, which is being designed specifically to attract leading developers of multimedia

technologies.

Partners in the MSC project will also benefit from new policies and cyberlaws designed to encourage electronic commerce, facilitate development of multimedia applications and establish safeguards for the protection of intellectual property rights.

The main responsibility of IAP members is to provide advice and counsel to the Prime Minister and the government on strategic issues related to the MSC such as infrastructure and environment, policies and cyberlaws, marketing and incentives, and the development of domestic industries, the MDC statement said.

The MDC, which is coordinating the Prime Minister's current promotional visit to California and later to Japan, said Dr Mahathir will also address two conferences for executives of technology companies interested in expanding business in Asia through the MSC here on Tuesday and at Stanford on Wednesday.

Dr Arif hoped companies which invested in the MSC would eventually collaborate with Malaysian IT companies in technology development and joint product development.

"But we don't expect it to happen overnight," he said.

He also hoped the MSC would become the "window of distribution for IT products worldwide". -- BERNAMA

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