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Mahathir-IAP

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) that Malaysia has formed to guide the development of its Multimedia Super Corridor.

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 Dean Michael Spence and Prof William Miller of Stanford, the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) announced in a statement here today.

It will be a unique opportunity for the IAP members 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 the IAP members to fully take part 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 that MSC would become the "window of distribution for IT products worldwide". -- BERNAMA

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