

15 JAN 1997

Mahathir-Laws

MALAYSIA TO BRING UP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AT ASEAN MEETING

By: Salmy Hashim

LOS ANGELES, Jan 14 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will bring up the issue of enforcement of laws to protect intellectual property rights at this year's Asean foreign ministers meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He told a news conference here on Tuesday that the governments in the region were not ignoring the problems of piracy of software or other multimedia products although enforcement had become increasingly difficult.

"Malaysia cannot ensure what is happening in neighbouring countries," he said but he felt there was greater realisation among countries to protect the intellectual property rights of authors.

Perhaps software producers would eventually create a foolproof way to prevent copying, but those who wanted to overcome it would eventually find a way.

"We will continue to have this problem everywhere until people have a sense of responsibility," he said when asked about concerns from software makers about piracy in the region.

The Prime Minister is on a week-long visit to Los Angeles and San Francisco to attract American investors to Malaysia's Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

Dr Mahathir, who earlier addressed the entertainment industry and spoke at length about the incentive package offered by MSC to investors, described the Hollywood community as very receptive and "we're hopeful that they would pick up the offer we extended them".

On the make-up of MSC's International Advisory Panel (IAP), he quashed speculation that its members comprising so many giant multimedia companies such as Microsoft, Apple and IBM would not be able to work together.

"It would be a good experience for them," he said, because by being in one room the chief executives of the companies would know what their rivals have to say.

The IAP, chaired by the Prime Minister, will hold its inaugural meeting at Stanford University on Thursday.

The primary responsibility of IAP members is to provide advice and counsel to the Prime Minister and the Malaysian government on strategic issues related to the MSC, such as infrastructure and environment, policies and cyberlaws, marketing and incentives, and the development of domestic industry. -- BERNAMA

SAL CTL