

26 JUL 1997

Dialogue

RESPONSE TO LID '97 OVERWHELMING

By: R. Ravichandran and Michael Raj

LANGKAWI, July 26 (Bernama) -- Response to the third Langkawi International Dialogue 1997 (LID '97), which begins Monday, has been overwhelming with the organisers trying to accommodate last minute participants.

LID '97 joint secretary Tan Sri Dr Omar Abdul Rahman said some 350 participants the world over are eager to "brainstorm" and share ideas and in the process create "smart partnerships."

"We only expected 250, but now we are making last minute preparations to take in an extra 100 people in the dialogue," he told Bernama when met while overseeing preparations at the Berjaya Langkawi Beach and Spa Resort here today.

Botswana's President Sir Ketumile Masire was the first head of government to arrive here yesterday followed by Swaziland Prime Minister Dr Sibusiso Dlamini and Jordan's Prime Minister Dr Abd Salam Al Majali today.

The other heads of government, President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Namibian President Dr Sam Nujoma and Mauritius Prime Minister, Dr Navin Ramgoolam are expected tomorrow.

Besides heads of government, vice-presidents, deputy prime ministers and ministers from countries such as Malawi, Mozambique, Seychelles and Ghana as well as corporate leaders are set to join the LID.

Elaborating on this year's theme, "Smart Partnership in Action," Dr Omar, who is also Science Adviser to the Prime Minister, said participants would share at least 25 experiences of smart partnerships.

"We want to learn what makes smart partnerships tick and how they can be applied at all times," he said.

The smart partnership concept -- matching government, companies and workers to do business in an international context, which made its debut in 1995, laid the foundation for a new business wave and heralded innovative management practices for the future based on what Dr Mahathir has all along been propagating, the "prosper thy neighbour philosophy."

While the first and second dialogues focussed on exploring the concept of smart partnership, LID '97 would review the success in the application of smart partnerships

"We are talking about action in LID '97," he said.

However, he said smart partnership was not just about clinching business deals, rather it was how all components of society, comprising the government, private sector and the people plus consumers could effectively synergise their resources towards one direction.

"More often than not, successful business leaders kept ideas to themselves, but here through discussions on an informal basis, ideas would be shared with a common vision of forging a beneficial partnership in the long term," he said.

Dr Omar that although the heads of government mostly came from southern African countries and Caribbean nations, LID was not a gathering for developing countries alone.

In contrast, it comprised key corporate leaders from the developed world as well.

Together with the respective components of society, they would try to pull together in the same direction towards achieving global prosperity.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is LID patron and adviser, would deliver a keynote address at the event on Monday night.

LID '97 is jointly organised by the Malaysian Industry - Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT) and the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management (CPTM). -- BERNAMA

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