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Building an environment for e-commerce

A NATIONAL structure must be put in place to provide strategic direction to oversee the development of the entire spectrum of electronic commerce, or E-Commerce.

International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said the structure should cover the necessary physical and administrative infrastructure that provides the environment for e-commerce activities.

"Issues being addressed (here) include the legal and regulatory framework for Internet transactions, security and privacy considerations, market access for suppliers over the Internet and the question of intellectual property," she said on Saturday.

Rafidah added that the issues were also of global concern and therefore Malaysia must be actively involved in any global initiatives to establish the necessary ground rules for e-commerce.

The Minister was speaking at the soft launch of the Internet World Malaysia 1998 exhibition and conference at the Kuala Lumpur Tower.

"E-commerce provides that opportunity and avenue to establish networking, normally not possible to realise, and enables producers and exporters to showcase their products and services to the world at large."

On this note, she urged the local business and industrial communities to raise the level of their awareness about the potential of e-commerce to strengthen their competitive advantage.

Meanwhile, Mecklermedia Corporation managing director for Asia, Michael Westcott, said several venture-capital companies from the Silicon Valley, US, would be invited to deliver talks at the Internet World Malaysia 1998.

"We will also invite them to see and gauge the capability of prospective local companies at the exhibition," he added.

Internet World Malaysia 1998, which will be held at the Putra World Trade Centre from Sept 17 to 19, will be officially opened by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. About 50 multinational and local companies dealing with the latest technologies in both the Internet and Intranet are expected to take part in the event.

The exhibition and conference, themed "Living in the Internet Revolution", is also aimed at educating the business, government and educational communities about the Internet and how it could be used to their advantage.

It will be jointly organised and managed by Mecklermedia and Digital Conference Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Utusan Melayu (Malaysia) Bhd.

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