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## National IT Agenda ahead of schedule

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The National Information Technology Agenda is progressing ahead of schedule, especially in terms of investment and development of the Multimedia Super Corridor.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the Government's target of 200 MSC-status companies by the year 2000 would be surpassed as there were already 175 MSC-status companies with investments worth more than RM3 billion.

Of these, 109 companies were already in operation, he said after chairing a National IT Council meeting at the Prime Minister's Department.

A total of 242 companies have applied for MSC status.

Dr Mahathir said he would be launching the "Virtual Commonwealth" on Tuesday, an online discussion between panel members in Kuala Lumpur, Washington DC (the United States), Brussels (Belgium), Geneva (Switzerland), Cambridge (Massachusetts, US) and New York (US).

Themed "Governance in an Internetworked World: Towards a Global Civilised Society", the 90-minute dialogue session will be transmitted live via the Internet, radio and television broadcast channels by NITC, Telekom Malaysia Bhd and RTM.

Dr Mahathir also announced the NITC's new line-up for the three-year term beginning next year.

The new line-up includes a journalist, social welfare advocates and university professors, underscoring the priority given to the "community interest" sector, in addition to public and private sectors.

Dr Mahathir remains chairman of the NITC while Mimos Bhd president and chief executive officer Tengku Datuk Dr Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen remains the council's secretary.

Other members for the term 1999 to 2001 are:

- \* Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali;
- \* New Straits Times Press Group Editor-in-Chief Datuk A. Kadir Jasin;
- \* NeuroNet (M) Sdn Bhd president and CEO Al Ishsal-Ishak;
- \* Putrajaya Corporation chairman Tan Sri Azizan Zainul Abidin;
- \* International Movement for a Just World president Dr Chandra Muzaffar;
- \* Hitechniaga Sdn Bhd CEO Cheong Yuk Wai;
- \* Kompleks Metro Wangsa Sdn Bhd CEO Dr Ghazali Atan;
- \* Federation of Malaysian Consumers Association president Prof Hamdan Adnan;
- \* National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health chairman Datuk Lee Lam Thye;
- \* Energy, Telecommunications and Posts Minister Datuk Leo Moggie;
- \* Third World Network director Martin Khor;
- \* Shell Malaysia Ltd chairman and CEO Datuk Megat Zaharuddin Mohd Noor;
- \* Securities Commission chairman Datuk Dr Mohd Munir Majid;
- \* Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak;
- \* Universiti Malaysia Sarawak vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Zawawi Ismail;
- \* Institute for Strategic and International Studies chairman Tan Sri Dr Noordin Sopiee;
- \* Science Adviser to the Prime Minister Tan Sri Dr Omar Abdul Rahman;
- \* Multimedia Development Corporation executive chairman Tan Sri Othman Yeop Abdullah;
- \* International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz;

\* Computer Industry Association of Malaysia (Pikom) chairman  
Shaifubahrim Saleh;

\* The dean of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Social Science and  
Humanities faculty, Prof Dr Shamsul Amri Baharuddin;

\* National Council of Women's Organisations vice-chairman Prof Datin Dr  
Sharifah Hapsah Shahabudin;

\* PhileoAllied Bank CEO Tong Kooi Ong (see CORRECTION above); and

\* Southern Bank Bhd CEO Datuk Tan Teong Hean.

Dr Mahathir said the new panel had agreed to set up five working groups  
to cover the issues of E (electronic)-community, E-multi services, E-  
learning, E-economy and E-sovereignty.

The NITC's next meeting will be held early next year.

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