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NO MSC IAP MEMBER HAS RESIGNED- DR MAHATHIR

By: Ahmad Fuad Yahya

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 15 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he has not received any formal resignation letter from members of the International Advisory Panel (IAP) for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

"I have been talking with a few of them lately and they are as keen as ever on the MSC," he told a news conference after opening the Apec Business Summit here today.

Asked on news reports that two MSC IAP members, Dr Kenichi Ohmae dan Alvin Toffler had resigned, the Prime Minister said, "We have not received any formal resignation letter."

"I was with Ken (Kenichi Ohmae) only last month and he never said anything about resigning. On the other hand, he was helping me to explain the situation in this country."

"So, I don't think he has resigned."

Dr Mahathir said the advisory panel had over 40 members and none of them had indicated any desire to resign.

He also said that he did not think his statement about Bill Gates would affect the Microsoft chief executive's position in the advisory panel.

"He is a good friend of mine. All I'm saying is that when you deal with anything you should have a certain standard."

"You don't have one standard for one case and another standard for another case."

In his opening speech at the Business Summit, Dr Mahathir highlighted the predicament of Microsoft chairman Bill Gates who used his great financial power to build his business but was now hauled up before the courts.

Dr Mahathir said, "He is a true marketeer, but the US government thinks he is being unfair to his competitors."

"Why should Microsoft be penalised for using market forces when currency traders are not," he said.

"If it is unfair, improper and illegal for Bill Gates to corner the market, then shouldn't the activities of the hedge funds be considered unfair also?"

"If Bill Gates' competitors have to be protected should we not protect the victims of the hedge funds also," he said.

-- BERNAMA

AFY AAM