

23 SEP 1998

PM-VC DIALOGUE

PM TO LAUNCH "VIRTUAL COMMONWEALTH" DIALOGUE ON TUESDAY

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 23 (Bernama) -- The first "Virtual Commonwealth" (VC) dialogue interconnecting six cities in the world will be launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Sept 29.

The 90-minute VC dialogue, themed "Governance in an Internetworked World: Towards a Global Civilised Society, will cut across time zones and be conducted in an open and transparent forum with worldwide access, live via the Internet, radio and television broadcast channels.

Permanent Secretary to the National Information Technology Council (NITC) Dr Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen told reporters here that the VC dialogue will involve an onsite panel and world personalities from Washington, Brussels, Geneva, Massachusetts and New York.

The video-conferencing with Dr Mahathir, live from Palace of the Golden Horses, will be held in conjunction with the two-day Multimedia Asia (MMA)'98, an annual National Information Technology Council conference and exhibition for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) starting Sept 29.

Tengku Azzman said the idea behind the VC dialogue was mooted by the Prime Minister at last year's MMA and, next Tuesday night, it will be translated into reality by NITC in collaboration with Telekom Malaysia Bhd and Radio and Television Malaysia (RTM).

Panel members include World Bank Group vice-president (East Asia and Pacific) Jean-Michel Severino, European Commissioner for Industrial Affairs, IT & Telecommunications, Martin Bangemann, and Secretary-General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Rubens Ricuperro.

Others are dean of the John F.Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Dr Joseph S. Nye, and Scholar-In-Residence at the Ford Foundation (International Affairs Programme), Brian Urquhart.

The VC dialogue will focus on issues such as global governance, the future of a nation state, poverty, politics and leadership, socio-economic justice and human dignity, media, culture and content, and ethics, morality and spirituality in the Information Age. -- BERNAMA

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