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Continued support for project

CYBERJAYA, Sat. - Members and representatives of the Multimedia Super Corridor's International Advisory Panel have told Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that they will continue supporting the project and make further investments.

In one-on-one meetings with the Prime Minister who is also IAP chairman, they told that they were confident the MSC would be a success.

"The members are now very convinced that the MSC has taken off," the Prime Minister told a Press conference at the end of a three-day meeting of the International Advisory Panel at Cyberview Lodge today.

Dr Mahathir said the members and representatives had also pledged to promote the MSC to attract more companies to participate.

He added that there were also concrete pledges made with regard to investments in the project.

"Those (companies) which have not invested are going to invest and those which have invested are planning to increase their investments," the Prime Minister said.

Asked whether Malaysia's rapid foray into IT was a matter of "one biting off more than he can chew", Dr Mahathir replied that it was more of understanding what was happening and accepting the need to change.

On whether the government would revise its target on investment in MSC due to the success attained so far, Dr Mahathir said it was difficult to say as it was an entirely new project.

"But what we see now is investment already in billions with expected returns at RM800 million. Whereas when we started in 1996, we really don't have much idea on the amount of investment and capital coming in."

Earlier, giving a summary of the meeting, Dr Mahathir said it went on very well and the IAP members were now very convinced that the MSC had taken off.

"From my discussions with them, they all have pledged to promote the MSC overseas and those who are not part of it yet wanted to do so.

"For those who are already here, they want to increase their participation."

He added that discussions with the IAP members had also enlightened him on the future of IT and its likely impact on the economy.

"They are a group of people who look ahead and what they say is very likely to happen, so we have to take note of that," Dr Mahathir said, adding that the Cabinet would be briefed on the outcome of the meeting.

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