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Judging begins for first Internet awards

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Judging began today for Malaysia's first Internet awards, which has received 558 entries in 10 categories of Internet excellence.

"The response has been overwhelming, and for a first-time event it's a very good start," said Tengku Datuk Dr Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen, president and chief executive officer of Mimos Berhad.

Earlier this year Mimos initiated the awards, known as the @my '99 Awards, to promote the best of the Internet industry. The awards are scheduled to be held annually, making it one of the few in Asia.

Tengku Azzman, who was briefing the 26 judges at the Pan Pacific Hotel before the judging sessions began, said Mimos hoped that the award-winning entries would be considered benchmarks of excellence which the industry could aspire to.

"Although Internet penetration here is low at less than 10 per cent, in terms of sophistication of thinking and operating the Internet, I believe we are up front with the most aggressive countries in the world."

However, Tengku Azzman noted that most of the entries were being hosted by portals based overseas, and said he hoped that would change with the next awards.

The judging panel this year is made up of academics, journalists, youth organisation representatives, IT experts and policy makers.

Among the judges are Tengku Azzman himself, Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission chairman Dr Syed Hussein Mohamed, New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd group editor-in-chief Datuk A. Kadir Jasin and Malaysian Technology Development Corporation chief executive officer Datuk Anuar Md Nor.

Also judging are Malaysian Youth Council president Saifuddin Abdullah and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's academic development director Professor Datin Dr Sharifah Hapsah Shahabudin.

The event is jointly organised by Mimos, the NSTP, Sistem Televisyen Malaysia Berhad and e-Asia Sdn Bhd.

Entrants will be competing for honours in the commercial, public sector, education and non-profit sites, most popular site, most creative online banner advertisement, excellence in e-commerce, best organisational use of the Internet, best national language site and best community development site.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will attend the awards presentation ceremony, which is tentatively scheduled for Oct 29.

(END)