

17/07/1999

New role for first ladies arriving for LID '99

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - The first ladies of 11 heads of government attending the 4th Langkawi International Dialogue (LID '99) from July 25-28 will hold discussions on how women can contribute to economic recovery during the financial crisis.

"The first ladies will contribute significantly during interactions at Langkawi," Tan Sri Dr Omar Abdul Rahman, the chairman of the Malaysian Industry-Group for High Technology, said.

Dr Omar, who is also Science Adviser to the Prime Minister, said this was a new feature of LID '99 which was included following special requests by the first ladies themselves.

The Prime Minister's wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, is expected to moderate the special session.

Some first ladies will also join their husbands in other interactions during the dialogue which has attracted some 300 participants from 38 countries.

He said this after a cheque presentation ceremony during which MIGHT received sponsorships totalling RM512,000 from 21 corporations.

Telekom, the major sponsor to the tune of RM1.5 million, had signed a sponsorship agreement earlier.

"The quantum of sponsorship received demonstrates a healthy show of support from the corporate sector for the dialogue," said Dr Omar.

Besides the 11 heads of government, he said the latest to confirm participation was Taiwan Minister of Finance Dr Paul Chiu Cheng-hsiung.

Dr Paul, along with Malaysian officials, will relate the experiences of how their respective economies coped with the financial crisis by taking recovery measures without the assistance of the International Monetary Fund.

By contrast, Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Dr Supachai Panitchpakdi will give the experience of a country which received financial assistance from the IMF, he said.

The Smart Partnership concept made its debut at the first LID in July 1995.

Smart Partnership promotes networking, not only between business sectors in a national and international context but also between governments, the business sector, labour unions and other interest groups, to explore opportunities to promote investment, business and prosperity.

This year's dialogue is themed "Managing Economic Recovery for Shared Prosperity - The Smart Partnership Approach."

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will moderate a session entitled "LID '99, The Way Forward 2000 and Beyond" which will include interventions from the heads of government.

(END)