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PM unveils awards scheme for contributors to MSC

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday launched the Asia-Pacific MSC Information Technology and Telecommunications Awards (APMITTA), a recognition to be given to those who have contributed towards the development of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

APMITTA is a collaboration between Australia-based Asia Pacific Information Technology and Telecommunications Corp and Asia Pacific Information Technology Awards (APITA) of Malaysia.

At the function, Dr Mahathir unveiled APMITTA's logo to mark the launch of the awards programme and later launched its website. Earlier, the Prime Minister attended an MSC Implementation Council meeting at Cyberview Lodge in Cyberjaya, an information technology (IT) city about 50km from Kuala Lumpur.

Meanwhile, Multimedia Development Corp (MDC) executive chairman Tan Sri Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah said APMITTA gives recognition to outstanding achievement of individuals, students and entrepreneurs, small-and medium scale enterprises and corporations which have contributed to the development of the MSC.

The contribution, he said, can either be in the form of the development of applications, solutions and content in relation to the MSC flagship application projects or those that can benefit the nation.

He said the APMITTA programme is also aimed at providing a platform for the enhancement and promotion of networking, technology transfer, innovation and training in the information technology and telecommunications-related industries.

Othman said the awards programme is also designed to encourage involvement across a spectrum of industries that are supported by information technology and telecommunications.

These, he said, include animation, content development, software development, production advertising and entertainment, electronic commerce and broadcasting.

Othman also said that APMITTA provides a unique opportunity for individuals and companies involved in the awards to win considerable exposure through ongoing official functions, promotions and publicity. These activities will allow the awards and participating organisations to provide opportunities for export of Malaysian information technology and telecommunications products internationally, increased community awareness of the IT and telecommunications industry and provide recognition for IT and telecommunication achievers.

The first APMITTA ceremony is scheduled to be held in October with Dr Mahathir as the patron. The awards will be held annually and will be directly linked to the international Asia Pacific IT and Telecommunications awards which will be staged at different destinations each year. Malaysia will host the international awards next year.

Othman said the APMITTA initiative is part of an on-going effort to promote the development of technopreneurship and which is envisaged to eventually lead to the enlargement of the pool of technopreneurs and IT and multimedia small- and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in the country, thus supporting the development of the MSC.

He said the MDC has recognised that technopreneurs and IT as well as multimedia SMEs are key ingredients for the success of the MSC, a 15km by 50km zone designated for the development of the IT and multimedia

industry.

In this regard, he added, the MDC has identified six elements required for the creation of Malaysian IT and multimedia SMEs and technopreneurs - venture capital and financing; incubator programmes; human resource development and training; cell of incentives; research and development support; and market access.

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