

07 SEP 2000

IAP-COMPETENCIES

IAP SUGGESTS MSC TO CONCENTRATE ON CORE COMPETENCIES

CYBERJAYA, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Panelists participating in the fourth Multimedia Super Corridor International Advisory Panel (MSC IAP) meeting here today recommended that the MSC focus on Malaysia's core competencies and develop the technology accordingly.

"It is not possible for our companies to compete head-on with the global players," said Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) executive chairman Tan Sri Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah.

The core competency included manufacturing, agriculture and biotechnology, he said, citing an example that in manufacturing, MSC companies could look into developing applications that improve productivity.

Dr Othman said that these were among the suggestions made by the IAP panelists, comprising world renowned information technology (IT) officials, when IAP chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir requested their views on how to reposition the MSC project.

The MSC is a 750 sq km zone, south of Kuala Lumpur designated as a hub for the development of multimedia products and services.

Speaking to newsmen at the end of the first day of the three-day meeting, he said there were also suggestions for a post graduate programme to train managers in marketing skills and mental make-up required to compete in the international scene.

"There's a great deal of confidence that we can draw from different institutions of higher learning overseas to jointly manage this programme," he said.

On the issue of third generation telecommunications, Dr Othman said that the panelists advised Malaysia to focus on developing high speed Internet, equal access on both fixed and wireless telecommunications and to develop Internet applications and contents.

He said there was also a suggestion that MDC, as the promoter of MSC, should become the conduit for small and medium scale enterprises (SME) of the MSC to collaborate with SMEs in other multimedia corridor projects.

"SMEs are needed to sustain the development of MSC and these SMEs need to collaborate with other SMEs in other countries in order to move forward," explained Dr Othman.

To a question, he said that the Prime Minister and the government are open to the suggestions and would review them after the conclusion of the meeting.

Asked on Dr Mahathir's opening remarks, Dr Othman, who is the IAP secretary, said that the Prime Minister took opportunities to correct the misperception foreign investors had on Malaysia's economy.

"Although we have come out of the recession, people don't recognise this fact and lumped the whole of South-east Asia into one.

"He tried to put across to the IAP members that Malaysia is well ahead in its economic revival," he added.

When asked to comment on reports which speculated on his removal, Dr Othman said his contract has been extended for two years from early August and he is going to fulfill that term.

Concerning concerns raised by a panelist that the MSC companies had failed to attract foreign venture capital funds, he said that the matter was interrelated with the capital market since the venture capital wanted an easy exit after they have invested in a certain company for a specific

period.

He added that a vibrant capital market will allow good returns in initial public offer (IPO) which is crucial for venture capital to exit from a company.

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