

E-Village up for sale

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Current developer lacks capital to complete the project, says Mahathir

CYBERJAYA, Thurs: The government is looking for a buyer for the E-Village, as the existing developer does not have adequate capacity and investment in building the hub for creative multimedia.

"We want to find another party interested in developing it. Initial investment was not adequate to implement it. But, we are not abandoning the project," Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He was commenting on the slow progress of the E-Village that was recently mired by controversy over delay in payments to contractors and consultants after a glamorous launch two years ago.

The Entertainment Village Sdn Bhd is the master developer for the E-Village.

It came under fire recently for not doing enough for the industry,

and the contractors involved in the project are demanding payments for their services.

Mahathir, who is chairman of the MSC International Advisory Panel (IAP), said a delay in the completion of the project can be expected as the government waits for a company to take over.

He was speaking to reporters after the 5th IAP meeting today with some 25 panel members at the Cyberview Lodge here.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, MDC executive chairman Tan Sri Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah and the panel members.

On criticisms levelled against the MDC and the MSC itself, Othman said among the restructuring exercises that will be conducted, one will be to bring in more talented people into the company.

"People like me have to

be weeded out soon.

"I suppose that's the way things are," he said, adding that MDC will invest in knowledge workers exchange that will be explored in the Middle East.

"We are also looking for people to buy us out, for instance, to buy the Optica Technologies Sdn Bhd," he added.

Asked on the report by the international consultant firm McKinsey & Co on the progress of the MSC, Othman said the MDC is implementing some of the recommendations, such as introducing new flagship applications, especially to provide design centre manufacturing and biotechnology.

"We will also encourage our companies to adopt their own technologies, especially in the area of information communication and technology (ICT) to boost their productivity."