

Three biotech institutes to be set up

SUN 12 NOV 2001

PENANG, Sun: Malaysia will set up three biotechnology institutes next year that would act as centres of excellence.

The three institutes are the Institute for Genomics and Molecular Biology, the Institute for Pharmaceuticals and Nutraceuticals and the Institute for Agricultural Biotechnology.

Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Law Hieng Ding said the three would be temporarily housed at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia and the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development

Institute respectively.

He said the three institutes would be moved to the BioValley within the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) area and would provide technical, intellectual impetus and support for the development of biotechnology companies.

Speaking to reporters after launching the three-day 13th National Biotechnology Seminar here today, he said his ministry is currently working out the details on land, hardware infrastructure and software, prior to presenting the BioValley proposal to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and

National Economic Action Council in a month's time.

He added that hopefully, Mahathir would be able to make an announcement on the matter by January.

Earlier, Law said innovations and technologies that are developed must have commercial value and for this, a Business Development Directorate (BDD) would play the role.

He said BDD would be the management body within the BioValley.

"This entity is to be responsible for identifying innovations and discoveries and converting them into viable business ventures," he said.