

28/04/2001

Counter the lies, says Dr M

Ashraf Abdullah in Dubai

DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wants Malaysians staying abroad to assume the role of diplomats and disseminate the truth about Malaysia.

The Prime Minister said this is necessary to counter lies spread by certain quarters, including the international media.

He said the international media, for reasons best known to them, continue to give Malaysia bad publicity.

"Unfortunately, the international media does not belong to us," he said at a dinner with about 200-odd Malaysians residing in the United Arab Emirates yesterday.

The dinner was organised by the Malaysia Club UAE, whose members are professionals and businessmen residing in UAE.

Dr Mahathir said that although Malaysia has had many achievements, the international media chooses not to report them.

He said foreigners who read and watch international media reports often get the wrong impression of Malaysia.

"But they (foreigners) tell us that when they come to Malaysia and travel between the airport and the city, they change their minds. Only then they realise that reports on Malaysia are untrue," he said.

Earlier, the Prime Minister visited the Dubai Internet City (DIC) and witnessed the signing of an Memorandum of Understanding between the Multimedia Development Corporation and the Dubai Technology, E-Commerce and Media Free Zone (DTEMFZ), which governs the DIC.

The agreement was signed by MDC chairman Tan Sri Othman Yeop Abdullah and DTEMFZ director-general Mohammed Gergawi.

Under the MoU, DIC and MDC are to jointly explore co-operative projects that can be accomplished through joint initiatives or between third parties identified by either of the two.

The scope of the collaboration also includes joint ventures and strategic alliances between companies identified by either of the two in areas of e-government, telemedicine, e-business and e-commerce, global manufacturing, smart cards, smart schools and Islamic e-banking.

Both organisations will also exchange information and share ideas about strategies and best practices in nurturing local IT and multimedia companies, access to venture capital and funding and networking among identified incubators, as well as secondment of staff between MDC and DIC.

"The agreement will play a key role in enriching the IT environments in both our countries through the considerable synergy that can be achieved by pooling our strengths," Mohammed said.

Othman said the MDC plans to set up a special incubator in Dubai Idea Oasis to help Malaysian companies set up operations in Dubai.

"We are looking at how we can leverage the growth of the Arab market and try and bring some companies to the region," he said.

Dr Mahathir also witnessed the signing of a three-party MoU between Malaysia's airportXchange Ltd (AX), the Dubai International Airport and DIC.

The first MoU between AX and DIC will identify potential business areas where DIC will provide AX with its Internet and Computing Infrastructure Services to participate in AX's e-commerce initiative.

AX, the developer and operator of an online open market place exchange known as airportXchange.com is a spin off of XYBASE whose principal activity includes operating a comprehensive e-business platform for the

airport community.

"The MoU between AX and DIC will ensure the implementing and operating of the Exchange in the Gulf region in line with the state-of-the-art facilities and infrastructure provided by DIC," said the president of AX, Suhaimi Abu Hassan.

The second MoU between AX and the operator of the Dubai International Airport facilitates a long-term agreement where the airport will be the anchor airport for the Middle East region.