

07 SEP 2001

Mahathir-Meeting

DR MAHATHIR MEETS MSC IAP MEMBERS SEPARATELY

PUTRAJAYA, Sept 7 (Bernama) --The Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, met separately with five Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) International Advisory Panel members at his office here today.

The five are Prof Derek Williams of Oracle Corporation, Les Hayman (Sap Ag), Prof Dr Richard Nicol (BT Asean), Datuk Tadahiro Sekimoto (NEC) and Narayana Murthy (Infosys Tech Ltd).

Each member met Dr Mahathir for 30 minutes with discussions focusing on the future direction of the MSC.

Also present at all the meetings was Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) Executive Chairman Tan Sri Othman Yeop Abdullah.

Hayman after his meeting said the discussion with Dr Mahathir was based on the development of the MSC and the future focus of the project.

"We particularly spoke about e-learning and how it can be applied in the local education system...we also spoke about the need for skilled workforce and I don't think this will be a problem here because Malaysia is producing workers needed for the MSC through its universities," he told reporters.

Nicol said he explained the setup at BT Asean, an MSC status company in the Super Corridor.

"I explained to him our operations here and how we hope to work closely with local universities as well as companies," he added.

Nicol said he had also told Dr Mahathir about the BT Asean intention to set up a few companies in the MSC with assistance from local venture capitalists.

Tadahiro said the talks with the Prime Minister covered a wide range of topics with emphasis on the economic health of Malaysia and Japan.

"We talked of the impact of the US economic slowdown in the region and although there is some effect..... but as far as Malaysia is concerned the damage is minimal and we are positive that the MSC will not suffer due to the downturn," he added.

He said the NEC was confident that the MSC would be a success story and he congratulated Dr Mahathir for his vision in creating the corridor.

Narayana said he thanked Dr Mahathir for inviting his participation in the MSC effort and suggested ways of improving it.

"With 546 companies including 46 multinationals in the MSC....we know it will be a success," he said.

He said Malaysia should not view the US economic slowdown as an obstacle to achieving success but use it as an opportunity to become stronger.

In rounding up the meeting, Othman said the views of the Panel members today were very inspiring as all of them had sincerely noted that the MSC was moving in the right direction at a very high speed.

"They also appreciated the government's efforts to create awareness among the people about the MSC as skilled workforce is needed to make it a success."

"There were also some ideas thrown in like the setting up of a leadership institute to train young Malaysians on the skills to negotiate and on good business practices," he added.

--BERNAMA

SR AKT AAM