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Recovery package by MNC group

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A GROUP OF multinational corporations (MNCs) in Penang is set to offer a "recovery package" amounting to several hundred million ringgit to help jumpstart the sluggish electronic sector.

It is learnt the package is being initiated by Frepenca, the umbrella body for 60-odd MNCs based in the Free Industrial Zone in Bayan Lepas. A majority of the MNCs are electronics-based.

NST Business has learnt that the package will include re-investments by a number of Frepenca members, some for the first time.

Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon described the recovery package as a tangible show of the MNCs' commitment to helping the State.

"Their efforts are timely. It shows they are a caring lot who want to help us at a time of need," he said at the State Gerakan Youth dinner in Sungai Tiram here on Sunday night.

"I expect other States to enjoy spin-offs from the package once it has been carried out," Koh said, without elaborating.

Meanwhile, Koh has proposed a common messaging standard for all small- and medium-sized enterprises.

"I suggest they use RosettaNet, an Internet-based transaction, to facilitate their business dealings with all the MNCs they serve. I have proposed the matter to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"The SME companies can be more competitive and can easily link up with their global suppliers," he added.

RosettaNet is an independent, non-profit consortium. It was initiated in 1998 and dedicated to the collaborative development and rapid deployment of open, Internet-based business standards for the online trading of high technology goods and components.

More than 400 IT and electronic components and semiconductor manufacturing companies worldwide, with more than US\$1 trillion in annual revenues, are linked via RosettaNet. They include Motorola, Agilent, Dell and Intel.

Also present at the dinner were Gerakan National deputy president Kerk Choo Ting, Gerakan National Youth head Teng Chang Yeow and Penang Gerakan youth chief Huan Cheng Guan.