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RAFIDAH-ROSETTANET

UP TO RM0.1 MLN GRANT PER COMPANY SET FOR THE ROSETTANET INITIATIVE

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 3 (Bernama) -- A grant up to RM100,000 per company would be provided to electrical and electronics (E&E) companies to get connected to RosettaNet, says International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz.

An amount of RM5 million has been set aside for the grant in 2002 but the allocation is only for companies with 60 percent Malaysian equity, she told a monthly media briefing here today.

Rafidah said the grant would cover the cost of buying RosettaNet software, firewalls, hardware, system integration fees, membership and entrance fees.

For multinational corporations and large local companies that assist local suppliers and RosettaNet Malaysia Sdn Bhd, a double tax deduction would be accorded.

RosettaNet Malaysia would be incorporated this month and would have its office at the Penang Skill Development Centre (PSDC).

Rafidah said RosettaNet Malaysia would be managed by a board chaired by her ministry with representation from both the public and private sectors.

RosettaNet, an Internet-based common messaging standard for global supply chain management is internationally managed by California-based RosettaGlobal.

RosettaGlobal has over 400 members from the world's leading E&E sector such as INTEL, Motorola, DELL and CISCO.

An affiliation agreement between RosettaNet Malaysia and RosettaNet Global is scheduled for next month (Jan 2002), marking the official launching of the former.

Many countries in North America, Europe and Asia have adopted the RosettaNet standards.

Malaysia, which is increasingly becoming an important supply hub for many E&E components, would be the fifth Asian country to adopt RosettaNet after Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Singapore.

The RosettaNet initiative was first announced by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in his 2002 budget presentation.

Turning to the fourth World Trade Organisation (WTO) ministerial conference in Doha, Qatar last month, she said Malaysia would seek to clarify certain provisions in the anti-dumping pact to prevent discretion that could lead to abuse.

"On subsidies, Malaysia will be seeking to strengthen the developmental provisions in the subsidies agreement," she added.

She also said that the WTO endorsed the extra two-year extension (until Dec 2003) granted to Malaysia to phase out the local-content policy in the automotive sector.

The policy which started in 1990, should by now have enabled companies to acquire the skills required to produce components of world-class quality sold at reasonable prices.

"If we are already very good, there is no reason why anybody should source from outside. Our manufacturers must now establish their reputation for quality, supply reliability, product integrity and pricing," said Rafidah.

On China's interest to bid for the Bakun Hydroelectric project, she said a Chinese's joint venture company that has been formed to bid for the project would get an equal chance with other competing companies.

Malaysia itself has expressed interest to bid for the 2008 Olympics projects in China, she said.

"I have registered Malaysia's interest to participate in infrastructure development, to provide some of the services and other equipment and facilities," added Rafidah. -- BERNAMA

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