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WORLD-CONGRESS
WORLD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONGRESS AT PWTC IN JUNE

By: Mohd Kamel Othman

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 22 (Bernama) -- Several of the world's influential and business leaders will converge here in June to attend the 10th World Economic Development Congress to be held at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC).

The three-day infrastructure-related congress, to be held for the first time in South-east Asia, is expected to be attended by 1,200 government and business leaders from more than 80 countries.

They will be here to assess the future direction of global economic development implications for infrastructure requirements and the opportunities offered, said congress director Jamal Nasir.

The confirmed keynote speakers to date include Dr Supachai Panitchpakdi, incoming secretary-general of World Trade Organization, former British prime minister John Major, former Philippines president Fidel Ramos, South Africa's finance minister Trevor Manuel, Singapore's communications and information technology minister Yeo Cheow Tong.

The other speakers are Tenaga Nasional Bhd chairman Datuk Dr Jamaluddin Jarjis, Multimedia Development Corporation executive chairman Tan Sri Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah and Christian Wallich, Asian Development Bank's director of industry, energy and infrastructure.

The privately-organised congress and an associated exhibition of infrastructure technology for the energy, IT, telecommunications, transport and water sectors will be held from June 27 to June 29.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has been invited to officiate at the congress. Also invited to give a keynote address is Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin.

Jamal told Bernama that the forum would focus on building partnerships and developing strategies to mobilise international investment capital, technology and expertise.

"The congress is recognised as a peak international forum for interchange on infrastructure development, global markets and national economies."

The congress will provide an outstanding opportunity for top-level management from Malaysia and the region to gain access to and network with world business leaders, said Jamal, who is also the managing director of EcoEvent Sdn Bhd, which successfully bid to bring the congress to Malaysia.

"At the same time we believe the congress will have major implications for international perceptions of Malaysia and its region," he said.

The focus of the Kuala Lumpur Congress, under the general theme "Infrastructure, Internet and the New Economy", will be e-commerce, the global integration of markets and infrastructure for production and consumption in the technology economy.

"We believe the congress will provide an unparalleled opportunity for the countries of Asia to give to the rest of the world, particularly infrastructure providers from Europe and the United States, a clear picture of their economic outlook and development priorities over the next decade," he said.

The exhibition is open to trade visitors and those interested about the congress should contact Brett Martin, public affairs director of the congress, at 03-6157-8205 or 012-2882-566 or e-mail ecoevent@putra.net.my.

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