

Heads of state arriving for dialogue

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By V. CHANDRASEKARAN,
ANTHONY TAN
and IAN MCINTYRE

LANGKAWI: It is all systems go for the Langkawi International Dialogue (LID) 2002 which starts here today.

The heads of state attending the dialogue started arriving at this island resort as early as Tuesday.

Among the 18 heads of state who have arrived are Namibian President Dr Sam Nujoma, Mozambique Prime Minister Pascoal Manuel Mocumbi and Mauritius Prime Minister Sir Aneerood Jugnauth. Also in already here Botswana's former president Sir Ketumile Masire and South African Deputy President Jacob Zuma.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is scheduled to deliver the keynote address at the banquet to be held at the Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre in Padang Matsirat tonight.

The dialogue proper will be held at the Pelangi Beach Resort.

Datuk Dr Mihaela Smith, chief executive of the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management (CPTM) and joint dialogue convenor, said LID 2002 would be as informal as possible.

"We want an informal environment so that the leaders

will feel at home and speak their minds" she said.

An interesting feature at this year's LID will be a dialogue session between a group of young professionals and entrepreneurs from the attending nations, who call themselves Club 29, and the leaders.

LID national committee chairman Datuk Dr Ahmad Tasir Looe Pihie said the involvement of young talent was part of efforts to ensure the younger generation would also be exposed to the smart partnership principles.

Dr Ahmad said it was the duty of the organisers to ensure that the young participants could be equipped with smart partnership skills in the dawn of the globalisation age.

The LID series is jointly organised by CPTM and the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (Might).

About 400 participants from 56 countries will attend this year's event.

The participants include heads of state, senior government officers, academia, media organisations, corporate leaders and entrepreneurs.

The theme for LID 2002 is "Towards a Smarter Globe: Enhancing Security and Prosperity for Development Through Smart Partnership."