

MSC panel to have new chairman after Dr M resigns

By HASLAN SHARIF **STAR** - 7 SEP 2002

CYBERJAYA: The Multimedia Super Corridor's International Advisory Panel (IAP) will have a new chairman after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad steps down from his government posts in Oct 2003.

While he will not remain as chairman of the annual IAP meeting, Dr Mahathir indicated his desire to continue playing an active role in the MSC's development.

"If I am allowed, I would like to sit in the meeting and listen to the discussions, and, if I am allowed, to give some of my views," he told a press conference at the conclusion of the sixth annual IAP meeting yesterday.

However, it is unclear whether he will chair next year's IAP meeting, which is usually held in September.

He is scheduled to take two months' leave before stepping down as Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir has been the prime mover behind the MSC's rapid development as a technology centre, and is widely credited for putting Malaysia on the world IT map.

In his capacity as Prime Minister, he has chaired all previous IAP meetings, beginning with the inaugural meeting held in 1997.

The IAP is a 46-member group of technology CEOs and international experts that provides counsel to the Malaysian Government on the development of the MSC.

He praised the contribution of IAP members to the development of the MSC launched in 1996.

He added that "we had some idea of the infrastructure needs" when the MSC project was started, but IAP members provided the Government with additional guidance on the rapidly changing nature of technology.

"They have given us insight on present thinking regarding the future of IT," he said. "We have listened to their views, suggestions and the thrust of their arguments, we have learnt a lot."

Yesterday, Dr Mahathir also gave an update on the stalled E-Village project, which he said would now be brought on track by a new developer.

He added that the project's original developer, Entertainment Village Sdn Bhd (EVS), had faced financial difficulties that forced the project to be put on hold.

The new investor is expected to be Budaya Hikmat Sdn Bhd, according to a news report quoting Multimedia Development Corp Sdn Bhd (MDC) chairman Tan Sri Othman Yeop Abdullah.