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BioValley to facilitate biotechnology industry

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THE development of BioValley, the catalyst and testbed for biotechnology sector in the country, will likely follow a similar model to the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

Located in a designated area within the MSC, BioValley will be equipped with world-class facilities and infrastructure comparable to the MSC.

In addition, BioValley will be designed to enable the co-location of a critical mass of researchers, industry workers and entrepreneurs in an environment created to facilitate networking, information and idea sharing, and the development of commercial activities pertaining to biotechnology, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Speaking at the BioMalaysia 2002 symposium in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday, Dr Mahathir said at the moment the development of BioValley has not yet included any physical building and biotechnology-related research activities are carried out at existing research institutes throughout the country such as Mardi and local universities.

However, he added, to avoid duplication of activities at these distributed sites, research and development (R&D) centres will be located at three new core research institutions to be established in BioValley.

They are the National Institute for Agro-Biotechnology, the National Institute for Pharmaceutical and Nutraceutical Biotechnology and the National Institute for Genomics and Molecular Biology, he said.

Slated for completion in 2005, BioValley will be managed by the Bio-Valley Development Corp, under the National Bio-Valley Development Board. With its location within the MSC, BioValley is expected to foster synergy between industries involving information technology and biotechnology, Dr Mahathir said.

He said BioValley will incorporate research, commercial, educational, recreational and residential facilities, including a zone catering specifically to manufacturing.

The project will adopt a cluster approach where it will comprise biotechnology research institutions, universities and specialised companies, he added.