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E-Village to get new lease of life

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THE Entertainment Village (E-Village) project of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) will be given a new lease of life under the hands of a new investor.

According to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is chairman of the International Advisory Panel (IAP), the investor will be given 1,800 acres of land to build three (biovalley) laboratories and a proper E-Village with facilities for film-making, to make it a world-class centre for creation of films and multimedia.

Phase 1A of E-Village, located in Dengkil, within the confines of the MSC, was launched by Dr Mahathir in 2000. However, in recent months, the RM3 billion project came under a barrage of attacks after the master developer - Entertainment Village Sdn Bhd - ran into financial difficulties, thereby hampering the project's development.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir said he will not stay on as IAP chairman after he steps down from office in October next year.

"There is no need for me to stay on as chairman. But I would like to give my views and sit in for discussions (of future IAP meetings)," he told reporters in Cyberjaya last week in conjunction with the sixth IAP meeting.

The IAP is a 46-member group of technology chief technology officers and international experts who provide counsel on the development of the MSC to the Government.

Dr Mahathir also said that the annual IAP meetings have been fruitful and members' comments were invaluable.

"We now need to study and analyse the many ideas and comments that were thrown out this year for the further betterment and advancement of the MSC," he said.

"For example, many advancements in technology and the use of ICT (information and communications technology) today which are common were thought impossible six years ago such as the application of three-dimensional technology."