

29 MAY 2002

Moggie-ICT

MALAYSIA AND SRI LANKA AGREE ON ICT DEVELOPMENT

KUALA LUMPUR, May 29 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and Sri Lanka today agreed to establish an inter-governmental cooperation programme (IGCP) on information and communications technology (ICT) development.

A joint statement today said that the IGCP was first initiated when Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe expressed his interest over the matter to his Malaysian counterpart, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"The IGCP between Malaysia and Sri Lanka is in keeping with Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's vision of a closer regional cooperation and transfer of know-how and expertise between developing countries," said the statement.

The statement was issued by Malaysia's Energy, Communications and Multimedia Ministry and the Economic Reform, Science and Technology Ministry of Sri Lanka.

It was issued when the Sri Lankan minister concerned, Milinda Moragoda, called on his Malaysian partner, Datuk Amar Leo Moggie, here today. Moragoda is on a three-day visit to Malaysia which began yesterday.

According to the statement, the IGCP would initially explore cooperation and knowledge-sharing on the areas of, among others, multi-tiered education and human resource development; and establishment of an ongoing investment promotion programme for ICT-related joint ventures.

It will include the establishment of ongoing inter-institutional cooperation programmes on specific sub-areas based on parallel centres of excellence and expertise centres; and ICT reform and policy formulation mechanisms aimed at maximizing consumer dividends, national development and nationwide technology advancement with respect to infrastructure establishment and application.

The statement said officials from both countries had held their early discussion during Moragoda's visit here.

The structure and work programmes within the IGCP would be formalised soon, it said.

Speaking to reporters later, Moggie said that Malaysia's experience in ICT had attracted interest from many countries including Sri Lanka.

He said that the Sri Lankan government was also keen to know more about the development of Malaysia's Multimedia University.

Moggie said that perhaps one of the related Sri Lankan institutions could cooperate with the Multimedia University in areas such as exchange programme on human resource training or distance learning.

Telekom Malaysia Bhd has also invested in one of Sri Lanka's cellular phone services operators.

-- BERNAMA

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