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MAHATHIR-CIP

DR MAHATHIR LAUNCHES PRE-SEED FUNDING PROGRAMME

PUTRAJAYA, Sept 29 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today launched the Cradle Investment Programme (CIP), Malaysia's first pre-seed fund for budding entrepreneurs in broad areas, but especially in developing ideas for the information, communications and technology sector.

Dr Mahathir said that the government was keen to provide financial assistance to potential entrepreneurs to help them realise their business potential.

"We (the government) are keen to help these people by providing the money, but they should not assume that the government is not worried whether we will lose money or not."

"Most of the time, we are being careful in pumping money," he said at the launching of the programme at the Ministry of Finance here.

However, he said young entrepreneurs should not be discouraged if they find difficulties in getting financial assistance to support their business ideas and should not hesitate to seek support from venture capitalists.

"There are ideas that may produce some results and some may not, but despite this, venture capitalists should give sufficient support and assistance to these entrepreneurs.

"And in the meantime, entrepreneurs should have some individual funds to help support their own ideas which would make them feel more motivated to pursue their ideas," Dr Mahathir said.

The Prime Minister also commended venture capitalists who were willing to take the risk to invest funds, knowing that out of 20 ideas produced, one would finally emerge as the money spinner for the company.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Finance Minister, today also gave out grants totalling up to RM1 million to 20 pioneer entrepreneurs under CIP which was managed by the Malaysia Venture Capital Management Bhd (MAVCAP).

A total of RM100 million has been allocated by the Ministry of Finance (MOF) in assisting individuals in getting their original ideas off the ground, mostly in ICT, by providing grants and technical support.

Meanwhile, the chairman of MAVCAP, Datuk Dr Abdul Samad Alias, said the 20 selected entrepreneurs would be paired with experienced business people under the mentoring scheme, so that raw ideas could be converted into viable and commercial projects.

Today, CIP has over 70 experienced business professionals and entrepreneurs who are willing to contribute to the programme, which covers a broad fields, including ICT, hi-tech consumer and business products, electronic, medical devices and biotechnology and life sciences.

Since its inception in July this year, MAVCAP has received more than 1,200 applications with interesting original ideas.

CIP expects to fund between 300 to 500 ideas by the year end. --

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