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MDC-SPONSOR

MDC RAISES RM500,000 FROM CORPORATE SPONSORS FOR ICT AWARDS

KUALA LUMPUR, July 1 (Bernama) -- The Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) raised close to RM500,000 from its first batch of corporate sponsors for the Asia Pacific Information and Communication Technology Awards (Apicta) 2003.

Regular sponsor Telekom Malaysia Bhd, which contributed RM100,000, will become an award category sponsor for the Prime Minister's Award to be presented to the "Best of the Best" amongst the winners.

Other long-time sponsors include Digi Telecommunications Sdn Bhd, Microsoft Malaysia and Asia-Pacific Institute Technology Sdn Bhd (Apiit), which contributed RM50,000 each, and Ericson (M) Sdn Bhd with RM15,000.

Non-monetary fund worth about RM100,000 by Astro include publicity of the event on Astro and video filming of the presentation.

MDC expects to collect another RM100,000 in the coming month.

The sponsorship fund is expected to cover the cost of the award including sponsoring the winners, who will represent Malaysia at the international Apicta Awards in Cairns, Australia, in September.

Last year, MDC raised RM370,000 in cash.

Additional funds after deducting the cost would be used to develop and market the ideas by technopreneurs and students who are competing in the event.

A brainchild of MDV, the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC)-Apicta, under the patronage of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, will provide a platform to stimulate creativity and excellence in ICT in Malaysia, benchmark local ICT products and solutions, and to recognise outstanding achievements of ICT students, technopreneurs, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and organisations in Malaysia.

In his speech at the sponsors' cheque handing-over ceremony today, chief executive officer of MDC, Datuk Dr Mohamed Arif Nun, said one of the key objectives of the MSC-Apicta was to reinforce the aspirations of the MSC and to nurture local SMEs to become global players and ICT icons over time.

"This is part of our strategy to leapfrog Malaysia into the front of the knowledge age whereby we will no longer be mere technology consumers but also producers of new world-class technologies and contents for both the local and international markets," he said.

He said it was important to acknowledge the pivotal role the private sector and those in the industry played in the development of ICT in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, Minister of Energy, Communications and Multimedia Datuk Amar Leo Moggie, who officiated at the ceremony, said that Malaysia should aim to be a globally competitive hub in the ICT sector.

"The MSC-Apicta award will help spur, identify and create this crucially needed talent pool in Malaysia. It will provide an ideal environment to celebrate and promote Malaysian talents in the ICT arena," he said.

The MSC-Apicta, which is now into its fourth year, received 221 nominations including 62 student projects. -- BERNAMA

PK TJK