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LID-WrapUp

ALL SYSTEMS GO FOR 7TH LANGKAWI INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

By: Muin Abdul Majid

LANGKAWI, July 29 (Bernama) -- The stage is set for the Global 2004

Langkawi International Dialogue starting Thursday as developing countries once again come face to face with issues plaguing their path towards development.

A stream of presidents, prime ministers, entrepreneurs and a king have converged on this legendary resort island to partake in three days of intense discussions over efforts to uplift the well-being of the citizens of the developing countries of the South.

Under white marquees erected on the white sands of the Pelangi Beach Resort, a record 700 participants will hold talks on long-standing issues like poverty eradication and efforts to foster smart partnership among the corporate sectors of participating countries.

South African Vice-President Jacob G. Zuma went straight to the point when he said that globalisation and poverty were the two big issues facing the world today.

"While the world is (being) developed, it doesn't seem to be addressing the problems of the poorest of the poor," he said on arrival at the Langkawi International Airport.

The three-day dialogue, themed "Towards a Smarter Globe-Reconciling Development Challenges with Global Security Through Dialogue," will be opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today.

This is the first time the biennial dialogue is being held under the helm of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, the Host Patron of the Global 2004.

The leaders are expected to take stock of the progress achieved by the smart partnership process embodied by the LID and take further measures to move it forward to bring about a more equitable world.

The host patron of Global 2003, King Mswati of Swaziland, said he hoped to touch on the subject of how small economies could cooperate with

countries having bigger economies at the dialogue in Langkawi.

Science, Technology and Innovations Minister Datuk Dr Jamaludin Jarjis was more succinct in outlining his thoughts about the LID, first mooted by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in 1995.

In a message issued ahead of the LID, he said the dialogue would give emphasis to meeting the challenges of creating a more equitable world so that the divide between the haves and have-nots could be narrowed.

"This will require the boldness of leaders, governments, business community and society as a whole to tackle the challenges," he said.

His sentiment was echoed by Namibian President Dr Sam Nujoma who said that commerce and trade linkages between developed and developing countries must be based on mutual benefit for all the parties involved.

"No exploitation of men by men should be allowed," said the LID veteran who has led Namibia, a nation of 1.95 million, since March 1990.

-- BERNAMA

MAM TOM