

30 JUL 2004
LID-WrapUp
LID LOOKS TO EFFECTING SMART PARTNERSHIP

LANGKAWI, July 30 (Bernama) -- The second day of the Langkawi International Dialogue saw participants wasting no time to get down to brass tacks on the business of effecting smart partnership, a movement pioneered by Malaysia among south-south countries.

Top on their agenda was tackling poverty and how to go about it effectively. While the atmosphere was informal, the tone was serious as national leaders, politicians and corporate chieftains, searched for ways to concretise a number of business proposals.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said various issues were discussed but poverty was much talked-about.

Saying that it was not an easy task, he added that the Malaysian government took more than 30 years to bring down the poverty rate to five per cent from 52 per cent.

His deputy, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, cited land reform as a way out of poverty.

"We can show what we have done in Malaysia and perhaps they can use elements of our experience in their own country," he said.

Datuk Abdul Wahid Omar, Group Chief Executive Officer of Telekom Malaysia Bhd, said businesses should support governments in poverty eradication because those which ignored such social responsibilities were unlikely to sustain.

Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said leaders of developing countries who had taken part in the smart partnership dialogue now had a clearer understanding to better administer and develop their countries concerned.

Uganda, which has just rolled out its 10-year strategic socio-economic development plan, is one good example.

It has rolled out the red carpet for Malaysian investors to take advantage of the tremendous business opportunities in place for Uganda had adopted many investment incentives after those in Malaysia, said Vice-President Prof Gilbert Bukenya.

And like Zambian Vice-President Dr Nevers Mumba, he also sounded out a warning that if the poverty in Africa was not overcome, it could affect the whole world.

With just one more day before the dialogue ends on Saturday, the participants are expected to give one final push to seek ways to effect a smarter globe, especially in poverty eradication, which is the key towards global security as well.

-- BERNAMA
MR SHY TOM