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PM to chair meeting to select BioValley industry players

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi will chair the National Biotechnology and Biodiversity Council meeting on April 1 to decide on the industry players for the BioValley project.

Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Law Hieng Ding said, if chosen, these companies would be given the BioValley status (similar to MSC status) and would enjoy the benefits offered by the Government.

"We are in the midst of submitting the biotechnology policy to the Cabinet," he told a Press conference after launching Dolly-the-Sheep board game at Legend Hotel here today.

Law said the multi-million ringgit project was progressing very well.

"The layout plan is ready and will be submitted to the Cabinet. Once, it's cleared we will come out with brochures introducing the BioValley."

Members of the council include Ministers of Science, Technology and Environment; Agriculture; Health; International Trade and Industry; Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs; Primary Industries; Energy, Communication and Multimedia and Education.

All Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers also sit on the council.

The BioValley project, launched by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad on May 20, last year will see a wide spectrum of biotechnology-related activities such as drug research and bio-processes operating on different technology platforms.

The project comes next in importance after the MSC to make Malaysia the hub for biotechnology-based industry in the region.

Three national institutes - the National Institute for Agro-Biotechnology, National Institute for Genomics and Molecular Biology, and National Institute of Nutraceutical and Pharmaceutical Biotechnology will be sited in BioValley as core facilities for research and development activities in the area.

Earlier, when launching Dolly-the Sheep board game, Law said it would create more interest in biotechnology among students and encourage discussion of its impact on everyday life.

About 2,000 units of the board game have been developed by the British Council and the National Biotechnology Directorate.