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Business Forum gets encouraging response

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The inaugural Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Business Forum starting on Sunday has received encouraging response from business communities in NAM countries.

Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute (Asli) chief executive officer Datuk Dr Michael Yeoh said so far, some 340 people from the commerce and industry sector had confirmed participation.

Yeoh, who is also the organising committee chairman, expects 400 people to attend the two-day forum.

"On the opening day, we expect about 800 people to attend as Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will deliver a keynote address.

"We have received tremendous response from the business community, which shows NAM is more than just a leaders' meeting; it is a vehicle for an exchange of business information, developing linkages and exploring business opportunities," he told a news conference after a cheque presentation ceremony by HSBC Bank Malaysia Bhd at the HSBC headquarters in Kuala Lumpur today.

HSBC deputy chairman and chief executive officer Zarir J. Cama presented a mock cheque to Yeoh during the brief ceremony.

Also present were HSBC executive director and adviser Datuk Sulaiman Sujak, HSBC general manager (commercial banking) Richard Lee Say Tshin and Asli vice-president and chief operating officer Jean Wong.

HSBC, one of the event partners, contributed RM75,000 for the forum. HSBC is the only foreign bank involved as an event partner.

Cama said HSBC, with a presence in 81 countries, is the best represented financial service institution in NAM countries.

"With our global network and expertise, we can help their businesses expand and venture overseas."

He said besides enhancing HSBC's image, the sponsorship would also expand the bank's relationship and contacts with the business sector.

The NAM Business Forum is organised by Asli in association with the Foreign Ministry and Malaysia South-South Association (Massa).

Organisations who are also event partners include the Confederation of Indian Industry, the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Commerce International Merchant Bank, DRB-HICOM, Multi-purpose Holdings, Nestle and Ranhill Bhd.

Others include Southern Bank Bhd, Tenaga Nasional Bhd and UEM-Renong Group.

The New Straits Times is the official newspaper while Sistem Televisyen Malaysia Bhd (TV3) is the official broadcaster.