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Forum to discuss corporate challenges amid globalisation

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A HIGH-level forum in Kuala Lumpur this Thursday will discuss the challenges facing Malaysian companies amid globalisation, including how they can gain competitive advantage as businesses become more international.

The one-day forum, themed "Competing in the Globalised World: Becoming a World-Class Player", is organised by the London Business School Alumni Club of Selangor and the Federal Territory. It will be held at the Putrajaya Marriott Hotel.

In an interview recently, Alumni Club president Mohd Eusoff Abdul Carrim said the Kuala Lumpur forum is the first this year in a series of the London Business School's Global Forum, held in various cities worldwide.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is scheduled to deliver the keynote address at the event, while the London Business School will be

led by its Dean Laura D'Andrea Tyson, who was the National Economic Adviser in the Clinton Administration.

Mohd Eusoff said Malaysia has so far been moving in the right direction in terms of preparing companies for global challenges.

Regulators like the Securities Commission (SC) and Bank Negara have spearheaded the move by initiating the Capital Market and Financial Sector masterplans respectively, he said.

Mohd Eusoff, who is also ABN AMRO Bank Bhd executive director, said the local banking sector took the lead with the round of banking mergers in 2000.

The consolidation saw 54 financial institutions being merged into 10 core banking groups operating today.

He said the business environment is continuously changing and companies need to prepare themselves to adapt to these changes.

"Doing business today is more complicated than what it was three or four years ago.

"Markets will have to open up and everybody is competing for a bigger share of the same pie - that's globalisation," Eusoff said.

Discussion at the forum will include how to distribute the benefits of globalisation more widely, how Malaysian companies can generate global value and how managers can deal effectively with the cultural changes brought about by globalisation.

There will be three parallel discussion sessions co-chaired by London Business School representatives Professor Christopher Earley, an expert on cross-cultural management and Professor George Yip, a leading authority on

global strategy and marketing, and leading Malaysian corporate personalities.

They include Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd chief executive officer Tengku Mahaleel Tengku Ariff, Bank Negara governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz, YTL Corp Bhd managing director Tan Sri Francis Yeoh and Isis Malaysia's chairman Tan Sri Dr Noordin Sopiee.