

Muhyiddin promotes Malaysia's biotechnology industry abroad

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WASHINGTON: Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin lent his hand to 'sell' Malaysia's biotechnology industry to the biotechnology's movers and shakers attending the BIO International Convention here as he presented the direction and advantages driving the industry.

Muhyiddin, who was given the honour to officiate the exhibition at the convention, making him the first foreign leader to do so, presented Malaysia's efforts and positions in the biotechnology area to the crowd who attended the ceremony at the Walter E Washington Convention Centre on Tuesday.

"Malaysia recognised the role we can play in the advancement of the regional, even global biotechnology sectors, namely healthcare and pharmaceuticals, industrial and agricultural," he said.

Muhyiddin highlighted Malaysia's advantages which included the strategic location, abundance of biomass, natural tropical biodiversity, skilled and competent workforce as well as a stable and supportive government.

He told the largely international audience that Malaysia was poised to be the engine that drives biotechnology in areas of biopharmaceuticals, medical devices, contract manufacturing, active pharmaceutical ingredients, clinical trials and other subsectors in the industrial and agricultural biotechnology.

He also pointed out that Malaysia's position as a halal hub held tremendous potential for halal pharmaceuticals.

He said that Malaysia had nurtured 188 companies through its BioNexus programme where they would enjoy a set of incentives and services based on the Bill of Guarantees, backed by the Malaysian government.

From the total BioNexus companies – eight were fully foreign owned and 45 companies had joint shareholding from the US, Australia, Belgium, Holland, the UK, India, Japan, Singapore and Taiwan, he said.

He was promoting Malaysia's dedicated biotechnology ecosystem and park Bio-Xcell, which would be focusing on manufacturing as well as research, development and commercialisation (R&D&C).

"Bio-Xcell is a platform and opportunity for global healthcare and industry biotechnology players to reach over three billion Asian consumers." Since Bio-Xcell's global launch at the BIO International Convention 2010 in Chicago, Bio-Xcell had successfully engaged three anchor clients – Biocon of India, GlycosBio of the US and Metabolic Explorer of France, with more than USD200 million investment.

Speaking to Malaysian journalists later, Muhyiddin said he was impressed with Malaysia's participation in the annual BIO International Convention, touted the largest world biotechnology gathering, and said that Malaysia should continue to participate.

He said the biotechnology sector had been identified as an important aspect of growth sector in Malaysia and there was a need to go beyond its shores to see what others had done. — Bernama

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