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Mimos in national grid initiative

By Izwan Ismail



Thillai says the national grid initiative will be a boost to the R&D community.

RESearch and development (R&D) efforts in such disciplines as sciences and engineering will receive a major boost when the National Grid Initiative becomes available in 2009.

The initiative, which is being spearheaded by Mimos Berhad, aims to put in place an infrastructure which allows the efficient sharing of computing resources, thus enabling R&D-driven entities in the public and private sectors to reduce their information and communications technology (ICT) spending on purchasing and maintaining computer systems.

According to Mimos' vice-president, software development and central engineering Thillai Raj, the grid technology platform will provide secure and inexpensive access to computational and data capabilities nationwide.

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He said through the National Grid Initiative, applications like the Agribazaar can further uplift the livelihood of communities in the agriculture and agro-based industries as it provides a highly secure environment for transactions to be carried out across the globe between the farmers and their prospective clients.

"The grid also offers compute resources where problems like weather modelling, earthquake simulation and protein folding, DNA research, as well as drug design can be addressed in a significantly lower cost to accelerate the nation's advancement in the forecasting of natural disasters and biotechnology initiatives," he said.

Currently, the Mimos Grid Computing Centre is in the midst of developing the middleware for the Grid initiative, which is expected to be completed by mid-2008. "We are now working on the grid middleware, which will enable the grid to hook

up to the rest of the world. These include resource management; virtual organisation, workflow management, security, service level agreement management, network management, and billing and charging," he said, adding that the whole system is expected to be ready by 2009.

"Once the grid is up and running, we will hand it to the Government, which will then decide on which company or organisation will run the grid service."

For the initiative, Mimos is looking at working with five partners with expertise in applications, hardware, and middleware. "To date, we have engaged with SGI and Altair Engineering for the initiative and are looking for another three," he said.

The Mimos Grid Computing Centre has a system with 2,000 central processing units (CPUs), three terabytes of memory, and one petabyte of storage.