

Dataprep on track to join IT league

By Doreen Leong

IT-BASED Dataprep Holdings Bhd is on track to rejoin the nation's top consulting and information technology service provider list after realigning its business to focussing more on customers' needs.

The strategy had also enabled the company to return to the black with a net profit of RM2.22 million on the back of RM48.19 million in revenue for the nine months ended Dec 31, 2004, compared with a net loss of RM20.18 million in the previous corresponding period.

Dataprep chief executive officer Chew Liong Kim said yesterday the company was seeking strategic partners to expand

into the region. He told *FinancialDaily* the company would meet an India-based firm in the next two weeks to initiate discussions for a strategic partnership. He hoped the partnership would enable it to bring its products and services to the region, especially China and Indonesia.

"It is still very premature but we hope to establish Indian business partners for our regional expansion," Chew said.

At a press conference earlier, he said Dataprep was also open to domestic mergers and acquisitions so that the local players could compete in the regional markets. "We would probably have to look at acquisitions or partnerships with

local players first before going regional," he said, adding the company had sent out feelers to several local players.

Chew said Dataprep's three-year plan to expand into the region would include increasing exports to account for 30% of group revenue from less than 5% currently. The company was targeting small and medium-scale enterprises in China and also the banking sector and multinational corporations in Indonesia.

It is learnt that the company was optimistic of surpassing the RM100 million revenue in FY06 as it focusses on securing contracts from the government and private sectors.