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MSIA AHEAD IN PRIVATE FINANCING OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

By: A.S. Morita

TOKYO, Feb 9 (Bernama) --Malaysia is 12 or 13 years ahead of other Asian countries including Japan for private financing of infrastructure development, YTL Corporation Bhd's managing director, Datuk Francis Yeoh Sock Ping said here today.

Speaking at YTL Corporation's roadshow today to Japanese investors prior to its listing on the Tokyo Stock Exchange on Feb 29, Yeoh said Malaysia has shown to the world that private finance of infrastructure development worked well and made it a profitable business.

Asia today faces a big problem of financing huge demand for electricity and other infrastructure which are required for continuous economic growth.

The World Bank and Asian Development Bank could not meet the massive financing requirement sufficiently and swiftly, and public sectors in China, Vietnam, Cambodia could not find solutions of financing their huge infrastructure development.

Malaysia, on the other hand, has gone ahead of meeting the requirement of infrastructure development through private financing with its successful privatisation policies under the wise leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr.

Mahathir Mohamad, Yeoh told a captive audience at the roadshow in Imperial hotel, Tokyo, which was attended by institutional investors, investment advisors and the media.

The roadshow was also attended by Datuk H.M.Khatib, Ambassador of Malaysia to Japan.

Since 1983, Malaysia has been successfully implementing the privatisation of roads, power, airports, telecommunications and ports.

YTL Corporation, an integrated infrastructure development company, and many other Malaysian companies such as Renong, Malaysian Resources Corporation Bhd, have been successful in meeting the requirements of government's needs to save US\$700 million (RM1,750 million) for infrastructure development, Yeoh said.

Malaysia is ahead of the game, for example, six cent per kw of electricity in Malaysia is the cheapest in Asia, and at least 20 percent cheaper than other Asian countries, thanks to the successful privatisation programme.

Earlier, Yeoh said YTL decided to be listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange, instead of New York or London, because Japanese are known as stable long term investors, in addition to their huge pool of savings in Japan, which could be made most use of for infrastructure development in Asia. --BERNAMA

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