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15 firms with MSC status plan to invest RM253m

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FIFTEEN companies accorded the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) status plan to invest RM253 million by the year 2001. By then, they are expected to make a combined profit of RM113 million a year.

This year, the 15 companies plan to invest RM47 million. First year profits for these companies are estimated at RM6 million.

The total workforce in these companies are expected to increase from 5,325 during the first year of operations to 14,391 during the fifth year of operations.

Multimedia Development Corp (MDC) executive chairman, Tan Sri Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah disclosed these figures, which are based on the respective submissions of the 15 companies, at a news conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

MSC status provide the 15 companies access to world class physical and information infrastructure, unrestricted employment of workers and freedom of ownership.

The 15 are: Datek Sdn Bhd, Infortech Cybersoft Sdn Bhd, Oracle MSC Sdn Bhd, Optidigit Sdn Bhd, Software International Corp Sdn Bhd, Ericsson Hewlett-Packard Telecommunications South East Asia, KNSB-MSB, Netcard Corp Sdn Bhd, BAAN Business Innovation (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd, PDS International Sdn Bhd, PROLIN (MSC) Sdn Bhd, Intel Malaysia Design Center MSC Sdn Bhd, Alam Tecknokrat Sdn Bhd, Radio Design Sdn Bhd, and HCL Technologies Malaysia.

Besides this, these companies will enjoy tax exemption from Malaysian income tax for up to 10 years or a 100 per cent investment tax allowance on new investments made in MSC, duty free importation of multimedia equipment and research and development grants for local small and medium-sized enterprises.

Apart from the 15, there are four "pioneer companies" with MSC status. They are Mimos Bhd, Telekom Malaysia Bhd, NTT, and Sun Microsystems.

The MSC area measuring 15km by 50km corridor from the Kuala Lumpur City Centre in the north to the KL International Airport in Sepang is expected to generate a total value of US\$25 billion (US\$1 = RM2.61) for the economic after the first five years of operations.

"We have received 75 applications for the MSC status of which 19 applications have been approved. We are still processing 55 more applications," he said during a press briefing for the MSC in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Othman said the MSC applicants will be advised within 15 days after the submission date if their applications are incomplete. The MDC will take a further 30 days for approval.

"We will only inform those who fail in their applications. If within the 30 days an applicant does not hear from us, it is most likely to be successful," he said.

The MDC will invite companies to submit proposals - or in MDC's term, Concept Request for Proposals (CRFPs) - for the multimedia development flagship applications when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad launches the CRFP on July 26.

"We will also brief companies on the CRFPs to guide them with more details and address some of their questions. Direct mailers will also be mailed to companies in our database," he said.

The four applications identified as the Multimedia Development Flagship

- electronic government, multipurpose card, smart schools and telemedicine
- involve industry project teams in conceptualising the applications.

They also offer business opportunities that require the development of multimedia solutions.

The other three - borderless marketing, research and development cluster and worldwide manufacturing web - are categorised under the Multimedia Environment Flagship Applications.

He said the broad concepts for these environment flagships are ready and industries have been responding well.

There are five CRFPs for electronic government, one for multipurpose card, five for smart schools and four for telemedicine.

"The CRFP will emphasise on defining the project objective and target its benefits rather than specifying the detailed technical requirements in the request for proposals.

"This will give companies the opportunity to cooperate and collaborate with government and other companies in developing solutions for various pilot projects," he said.

The evaluation of the CRFPs will be conducted by each flagship application taskforce led by Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Manpower Planning Unit for electronic government, Bank Negara Malaysia for multipurpose card, Education Ministry for smart schools and Health Ministry for telemedicine.

The evaluation for proposal is expected to be completed by year-end.

On the development of multipurpose card, Bank Negara's head of bank regulation department, Encik Mohd Razif Abdul Kadir, said two multipurpose cards will be introduced latest by June 1999.

"Originally, we plan to introduce one card but due to security reasons we opted for two instead. The Government will issue a card with details from the National Registration Department, the Immigration Department and Road Transport Department.

#### CONCEPT REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (CRFP)

##### CRFPs for Electronic Government flagship application

- \* Licencing & related vehicles services and utility payment
- \* PMS offices generic office environment
- \* PMS offices electronic procurement
- \* PMS offices human resources management information system
- \* PMS offices project monitoring system

##### CRFPs for Smart School flagship application

- \* Teaching-learning materials
- \* Assessment system
- \* Management system
- \* Technology infrastructure
- \* Systems interation

##### CRFPs for Telemedicine flagship application

- \* Mass customised/ personalised health information and education
- \* Continuing medical education
- \* Teleconsultation
- \* Lifetime health plan

##### One CRFP for multipurpose card flagship application

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