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BDM INTERNATIONAL EYEING M'SIA AS REGIONAL HQ

By: Salmy Hashim

Washington, Jan 11 (Bernama) -- BDM International, a global information technology company, is eyeing Malaysia as its regional headquarters in Asia to develop and modify software for the Asian marketplace, its chief executive officer, Philip A.Odeen, said in a telephone interview Friday.

Odeen, who is also president of the company, told Bernama from New York that a regional headquarters for Asia would be chosen over the next 18 months. "We are looking at Kuala Lumpur to serve all of Asia -- this would be an ideal location."

BDM revenue totalled US\$890 million (US\$1 = RM2.50) for 1995 and US\$993 million for the 12 months ended Sept 30, 1996. It has a worldwide staff of about 8,000 people in 80 offices in eight nations, including Europe and the Middle East. The company also has offices in Japan and South Korea.

The publicly-held company based in Mclean, Virginia, near here, which started out as a defence contractor, was recently restructured and has become identified as an information technology company involved in systems and software integration; computer and technical services; and enterprise management.

Odeen said Malaysia seemed an attractive location for investment because of its "very hospitable" attitude towards investors, and its highly-skilled workers with a good grasp of the English Language "to help us adapt and improve our software product for the dynamic Asian market."

The upcoming Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), which would likely generate plenty of business opportunities, made Malaysia more attractive to multimedia companies, he added.

"Furthermore, we would like to take part in this unique experiment in building an information technology centre for the Pacific rim," said Odeen, who has accepted Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad's invitation to serve on the MSC's International Advisory Panel (IAP).

Odeen said he planned to attend the inaugural IAP meeting, to be chaired by the Prime Minister on Thursday at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.

The 25 members of the IAP is said to include an impressive list of CEO's and presidents of multinationals such as Bill Gates of Microsoft, James Barksdale of Netscape, Nobuyuki Idei of Sony, Louis Gertsner of IBM, Tadashi Sekizawa of Fujitsu, Lewis Platt of Hewlett Packard, Stan Shih of Acer, Eckhard Pfeiffer of Compaq, Gary Tooker of Motorola and Masayoshi Son of Softbank.

Odeen described the MSC project as "a very exciting and a creative idea not found anywhere in the world" where the leadership is willing to support and advance mega projects such as the MSC.

On a personal note, he said, "It is a great opportunity for me personally to work with the prime minister and a distinguish group of businessmen," and he hoped to provide his input on training and creating a large pool of skilled and knowledge workforce who are ready to meet the challenges of the information age.

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