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Develop software for MSC, SMEs urged

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SMALL- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the multimedia industry should look into the possibility of developing software content on multimedia technology in the Multimedia Super-Corridor, said Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapha Mohamed.

"Some of the participating SMEs are quite good. They are up-to-mark and have the necessary expertise and exposure," he told reporters after delivering a luncheon address on "Creating World-Class Business Organisations in a Borderless and Electronic World" in Petaling Jaya yesterday.

"It's just that they were not fully aware of the business opportunities available in the MSC in the past while some of them need funding," he added.

In line with this, the ministry and the Multimedia Development Corp (MDC) will deliver a presentation on business opportunities available in the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) tomorrow.

About 180 Bumiputera small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) will be attending the special presentation which forms part of the ministry's programme to woo Bumiputera entrepreneurs to participate in the MSC.

Mustapa said several of the participating SMEs have already expressed an interest to participate in the MSC. However, he declined to disclose the companies' name.

He added that the ministry is currently adopting a wait-and-see attitude before it decides on the next course of action. "It all depends on the outcome of the upcoming presentation."

Earlier this year, the ministry and MDC jointly set up a special task force to encourage Bumiputera SMEs to participate in the MSC.

Meanwhile, in his luncheon address, Mustapa said today's chief executive officers must realise that a new world business order has developed - one that is independent, global and borderless.

"Traditionally, a CEO's job was to manage human, technical and financial resources and to deliver expected levels of performances and profit. Now, they have to become change agents.

"If anything distinguishes a CEO from a manager, he has to be a leader, he has to set directions and he has to have a vision," he said.

Mustapa said to compete, CEOs have to become a world class player.

"If you do not keep pace with the relentless pressure of technological advances and the multimedia information superhighway, you are no longer a leader.

"To be a global player means benchmarking ourselves and constantly upgrading ourselves in terms of quality, service, price and speed of implementing change," he said.

He said to create a world-class business organisation, "the CEO has to be a global manager who is able to think and strategise globally while still having to act locally".

"He will become a global cosmopolitan, a member of a new world management class who is internationally experienced and culturally sensitised.

"And he will have to handle international relations such as global, strategic alliances involving international communications and negotiation skills," he added.

The managers are not exempted. Mustapa said in this information age,

people who are flexible and responsive are required.

"Therefore, managers must response fast, be on-call 24 hours a day, and willing to take risk in business-making," he said.

Mustapa also said it is no longer good enough to simply be the best on the block or the best in the neighbourhood.

"Business organisations and companies today really have to be able to hold their own with the best in the world just to thrive locally," he said.

He said success in the global economy derives not just from meeting high standards for competition in world contests, but also from strong relationships - networks that link to global markets and networks that build collective strength.

"Thanks to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's initiatives, coupled with the country's booming economy and the spirit of enterprise, we have seen a number of local companies mature and brave enough to venture abroad, spreading their wings far and wide.

"Many Malaysian companies are now accepted as world players such as Proton, Petronas, Telekom Malaysia, Sime Darby Group, YTL Corp, Berjaya Group and Sapura," he said.

Mustapa added that moving beyond the home base offers wider opportunities to expand and diversify business portfolios, catch up on the latest technology at a quicker pace as well as sharpen the competitive edge.

"The companies subsequently improve Malaysia's position in world trade," he added.

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