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Dr M to lead MSC roadshow to Europe

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FOLLOWING the success of the first Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) roadshow in the US and Japan in January, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to undertake another promotion blitz of the project in May. This time, his destination will be Europe.

Multimedia Development Corp (MDC) executive chairman Tan Sri Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah, however, said the exact dates and countries are yet to be determined.

"We have not confirmed the locations yet. Probably ... the central of industrialised Europe and its neighbouring countries.

"We will also discuss other related multimedia activities during the roadshow," he told reporters in Kuala Lumpur yesterday after briefing Croatian Prime Minister Zlatko Matesa on the progress of MSC and the role of MDC.

During the first roadshow, the MSC held its International Advisory Panel's inaugural meeting in California in the US.

In another related development, Othman said MDC will organise a two-day brainstorming session in Langkawi this week to discuss the implementation of the MSC project.

It is understood that the meeting will involve various government agencies, privatized companies and the private sector.

At the same time, Othman said the task force to oversee the implementation of the project, headed by MDC, is working on the implementation of three of the flagship applications namely electronic, smart school and telemedicine. The team comprised a team of dedicated staff from universities and industries.

"They are working full time. We hope to complete our study on these three flagship applications by June.

"The next step will be to design the standards and identify pilot projects as well as draw out the specifications for the proposal," he added.

Of the three flagship applications, Othman said Dr Mahathir has directed that electronic government should be given high priority.

"This is because the Government wants Putrajaya (the administrative complex) to be completed by September next year. This is a pilot project that has high impact on the public as well as the business community," he added.

On MDC's plan to set up offices overseas, Othman Yeop said it will not only be located at the Silicon Valley in California but other countries such as in Japan and Canada.

"But our priority is the Silicon Valley because it is the hub for multimedia activities. Besides Japan, other proposed centres include Vancouver, Toronto and Massachusetts," he said.

The offices will be established in stages, which will take between five to six years. In the meantime, MDC may use facilities at Malaysian External Trade Development Corp's overseas offices and embassies to facilitate applications to participate in the MSC.

On enquiries received, Othman said so far, more than 400 companies have submitted their application to participate in the MSC.

Most of the enquiries are mainly from the US, Japan, Canada, Europe and local companies. There are also enquiries from Australia and Singapore, he added.

Earlier, Matesa said he is impressed with the MSC development, describing it as Malaysia's window to the future.

Matesa said the MSC development will serve as a guideline for Croatia for its future development.

"Despite the fact that we are a small country in terms of population, we also provide incentives such as in Malaysia to develop research and development," he added.

Bernamea reports: Audit firm Price Waterhouse will sponsor a briefing on the MSC and global technology trends, both current and futuristic, on March 13 in Kuala Lumpur.

Price Waterhouse, in a statement released in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, said a session entitled "A Look Into The Future" will be led by MDC executive chairman Tan Sri Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah and the Malaysian Institute of Microelectronic Systems (Mimos) Bhd president and chief executive officer Tengku Datuk Dr Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen.

The briefing will also feature presentations by a panel of Malaysian and international technology experts and will be co-hosted by MDC and Mimos.

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