

12/03/1997

Legal companies to help work out details of multimedia Act

Meera T'Ratnam

THE Multimedia Development Corp has asked some top legal firms to help work out the structure and details for the Multimedia Convergence Act, the corporation's chief executive officer Dr Mohd Arif Nun said.

The Act is one of several legislative bills that the Government plans to push through for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) project.

Dr Arif was speaking to about 100 executives at a US-Asean Business Council forum in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

He said two teams have been working at a break-neck speed to push forward the MSC's proposed flagship applications in electronic government and smart card.

"While the companies have no assurance they will be given preferential treatment in their applications of MSC designated companies, there is a tremendous rush of energy to forge these ideas through," he said.

While companies interested in the MSC have registered their interest, applications to become MSC designated companies, with the full set of privileges this will confer, will soon be available.

However, MSC designated companies involved in state-of-the-art technologies and research and development will be urged to locate to mini Cyberjayas to be designated within the MSC corridor so that infrastructure installed will be utilised to its maximum potential, he said.

Some 200 local companies have expressed interest.

At least five or six "Cybercities" are in the master plan, with another CyberJaya to be located south of the major Cyberjaya for software companies that want to be close to the action but not too close to the corporate environment, he said. There are also plans to create two tele-suburbs.

"We also plan to bring in international chefs and cuisines, as well as entertainment so our creative Silicon Valley geniuses have a well-balanced life," he said.

Dr Nun told the executives that infrastructure for CyberJaya will be ready by mid-1999 and that the Government will kick-start its plans for the multimedia university by using Tenaga Nasional's university in the interim. Some 50 students are expected to attend classes this September.

Next month, he said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to hold a video-conferencing session with different state bodies, public and private sectors to promote and help the dissemination of information of the MSC project.

Meanwhile, Putrajaya Holdings general manager Sharir Shariff said a total parcel of 2.45 million sq ft has been allocated to the Prime Minister's offices and other top-level government offices. The two parcels, which will be developed for government officers at the Economic Planning Unit and the Prime Minister's Department, will be completed next year.

(END)