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Moving ahead on a fine balance

CYBERJAYA - city of tomorrow. While the idea sounds fantastically futuristic, the reality may only take just all of 24 months. It will be a mammoth task turning 7,000 hectares out of the overall Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) development of 750sq km into the model intelligent and high-technology city of the future. The pioneer-settler companies are expected to begin operations by April next year. An aerial tour of most property development projects will reveal much bare red laterite, denuded valleys and shorn hillocks. The nascent Cyberjaya will be no different. The developers will have to take heed of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's words when he said every care would be taken to develop CyberJaya based on a symbiosis between man, the environment and technology. Indeed, for Malaysia to make the technological leap, this fine balance between development and the environment should not be pursued one at the expense of the other. Mahathir has envisioned CyberJaya not only as an intelligent multimedia city but as an ecologically-friendly one as well. When the developers go about their task of cutting and filling, digging and grading, they ignore the seven `so-called' eco-city targets set for the development of CyberJaya at their peril. The targets are very clear; conserving resources and aesthetic features, preventing pollution from commercial and industrial activities, minimising waste discharges, conserving water, conserving energy, recycling solid waste and reusing sewage. Considering the optimism with which the `hi-tech' goals of the MSC have been greeted by its proponents and participants, surely these seven targets are not insurmountable. There are any number of diehard detractors not to mention incurable sceptics who have no sympathy with Malaysia's grand vision, let alone see CyberJaya succeed. This should only spur the resolve of CyberJaya's creators. The next 24 months will tell.

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