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NTT research centre's completion brought forward

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IN a further show of confidence in and commitment to the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) project, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp (NTT) of Japan has brought forward by one year to 1998 the targeted completion of construction of its research and development centre.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in commending NTT for its substantive involvement in the development of MSC, said he was glad to hear that the NTT research laboratory will now be ready next year, instead of 1999.

"In Malaysia, we are a little bit in a hurry. Actually, we normally do things yesterday which should be done today... therefore I wish this NTT facility could already be on the ground today.

"But I am quite patient... I can wait until the end of next year," he said at the launching of NTT's new Malaysia-based subsidiary company, NTT MSC Sdn Bhd, in Kuala Lumpur last night.

Dr Mahathir said NTT, one of the pioneering companies involved in the MSC, has been very supportive of the project right from the very beginning.

Expressing the hope that NTT will continue to cooperate with Malaysia in bringing the project to fruition, the Prime Minister said the company had started participating from the early stages of planning and had provided a lot of advice and guidance on how to proceed with the setting up of the MSC.

On NTT MSC, Dr Mahathir said the company, with an initial capital of RM26 million, will work closely with local companies and government agencies.

"At the same time, NTT itself has entered into an agreement with the Multimedia Development Corp for the development of the Multimedia University where they will give a lot of equipment, scholarships and other support," he added.

The world should not fear the changes being brought about by the advent of the Information Age, the Prime Minister said.

"The future is going to be very different simply because the emphasis will no longer be on mechanical industries but rather on knowledge-based activities.

"We welcome this shift although we look to the future with some fear because we do not know exactly what will happen."

A clearer picture of things to come is emerging, "but what we forecast will not be exactly what will happen. Thus, it is very important that we try out things," Dr Mahathir said, noting that this is the premise for the development of the MSC.

Meanwhile, NTT president and chief executive officer Miyazu Junichiro said NTT MSC will focus on two main areas of activities - to carry out research and development, and provide communication services to corporate clients.

"Our research centre will also work with local universities and institutions.

"We are happy to participate in the expansion and development of the MSC as well as Malaysia's economy," he said, adding that in the spirit of smart partnership, NTT is ready to collaborate with local companies.

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