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PRICE WATERHOUSE TO SET UP TECHNOLOGY CENTRE FOR MSC

KUALA LUMPUR, March 13 (Bernama) -- International consultants Price Waterhouse is looking to set up a technology centre to provide research and information support for multimedia companies wanting to locate their operations in the Multimedia Super Corridor.

Its executive chairman for Malaysia Raja Datuk Arshad Raja Tun Uda said the proposed centre, to be located in the MSC, would be linked to Price Waterhouse's world technology centre in Menlo Park, a technology park, in California.

The company was now discussing details of the proposal and it was premature to unveil the details at present.

Price Waterhouse Technology Centre executive director Dr Paul Turner said that when the proposed centre was ready, it would serve as a testbed for technology developed by Information Technology (IT) companies.

Raja Arshad and Dr Paul were speaking to reporters at a press briefing held in conjunction with the launching of "Technology Forecast '97" the firm's ninth annual publication on global IT trends and developments.

Dr Turner, who described the government-led MSC initiative as very timely, said: "We regard the MSC initiative as extremely timely in this context as a testbed for the development of new multimedia applications."

Price Waterhouse was inspired and challenged by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's vision and leadership in creating the MSC, he added.

The prime minister was instrumental in shaping the agenda for the New World, in particular in the field of multimedia and IT, he said.

In many developed countries, the absence of political will and obstacles posed by the absence of legislation and other protective mechanisms inhibited the growth of high-tech multimedia systems like electronic government, telemedicine and distance learning.

"But, it is different with Malaysia, as it appears to be dealing with these issues very well, by providing all the right ingredients to make the MSC and its applications not only a reality but also viable," he added.

Dr Turner called the MSC a bold and imaginative initiative that offered great potential benefits both to Malaysia and to its global partners in the venture.

He said, however, the success of MSC's implementation relied on two critical preconditions:

- + the capability to put in the right physical as well as financial infrastructure in order to support a very high-banded and critical multimedia application such as "the provision of a gigabit data rate communication infrastructure, and

- + cyberlaws, if the technology was to achieve its full potential and value.

He cited the protection of intellectual property as an important area in the information age.

The proposed amendment to Malaysia's Intellectual Property Act shows the MSC initiative recognised the need for such protection as an incentive for the creation of value added intellectual property of all kinds, a crucial aspect of building multimedia-based industries, he said. -- BERNAMA

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