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Mahathir-Cyberjaya

SEEK OPPORTUNITIES IN CYBERJAYA, URGES MAHATHIR

SEPANG, May 17 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on all Malaysians to open up their minds to the wide-ranging possibilities and opportunities available in Cyberjaya, the nucleus of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

The Prime Minister said although the MSC, particularly Cyberjaya, was intended to facilitate the country's transition to an information age multimedia economy, it did not mean that other industries would take a backseat.

"Information and multimedia technology should never be an end in itself. Effectively used, it will act as a valuable input, and in many cases, a catalyst for many other industries," he said when officiating the ground breaking ceremony and the launching of Cyberjaya, Malaysia's first smartcity located at a 2,800 hectares site, in Bukit Damar here.

"Advances in multimedia technology will lead to new applications, spurring the growth of trade and commerce, as well as the growth of productivity and efficiency in all the sectors," he said.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Cabinet ministers and local and foreign dignitaries.

Dr Mahathir said there would be numerous opportunities and spin-off benefit in Cyberjaya, the impact of which would be felt for many generations ahead.

For example, he said, there would be plenty of rooms to provide content and value-added services although the main pipeline would be the multimedia services.

"I would like to take this opportunity to call upon local companies to look into strategic alliances and collaboration with global companies to explore this wide area of content development, especially to meet the need of the Asia Pacific communities, whose cultural and social value system may differ from those of the West," he said.

The Prime Minister said that to date, seven specific sites had been identified for the location of some of the pioneering projects to be located in the Flagship Zone which is the hub of Cyberjaya.

He said by late 1998, phase one, comprising a 750-hectare development would be completed while the remaining area would be developed in stages up to the year 2005.

Dr Mahathir said a total of 39 companies, both local and foreign, have already committed to locating their operations in Cyberjaya.

"I would like to congratulate these pioneering companies for taking that bold step forward into the future," he said.

The Prime Minister said based on the high level of interest generated and positive feedback received over the past few months, the government was confident that many other companies would soon follow the lead.

To the foreign investors, Dr Mahathir said: "I believe we have a compelling proposition for you to come and share our vision to build the perfect multimedia hub through a mutually beneficial relationship."

"We also invite you to use our strategic position to tap into the Asia Pacific cultures and marketplace," he added.

Dr Mahathir said since the launch of MSC last year the government has sought many potential companies to explain Malaysia's plan to build the corridor and the attractive infrastructure which accompanied it.

He said another promotional visit has been planned for next Tuesday to

meet potential investors in Europe.

The Prime Minister said the launch of Cyberjaya today could not have been more timely as the world celebrates Telecommunications Day in commemorating the founding of the International Telecommunications Union some 132 years ago.

He said the telecommunications industry in Malaysia has certainly come a long way since the privatisation of Telekom Malaysia and the rationalisation of the industry.

He said currently there are around 3.8 million fixed lined customers and 1.8 million mobile phone users in Malaysia.

"Our penetration rates are very high by world standards and are going at a rapid phase. Mobile telephone penetration, for instance, stands at nine percent, even higher than that of Japan when mobile telephone was initially introduced in that country," he said.

Dr Mahathir later witnessed the signing of an agreement between Telekom Malaysia and Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation (NTT) which would made NTT the supplier of intelligent building services for Cyberjaya.

Telekom Malaysia was represented by its chief executive officer Datuk Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali and NTT by its president Junichiro Miyazu.

The Prime Minister later visited an exhibition on the activities of all committed companies that would set up their operations in Cyberjaya.--

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