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HEWLETT PACKARD CONFIDENT MSC WILL NOT BE AFFECTED BY CRISIS

KUALA LUMPUR, March 24 (Bernama) -- Hewlett Packard, the renowned US-based information technology firm, is confident that the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) project will not be affected much by the regional economic crisis, said Lewis E. Platt, the company's chairman, president and chief executive officer.

Platt, who is a member of the International Advisory Panel (IAP) for the MSC, said in terms of government expenditure, the project has largely been completed, and now it is up to the private sector to do the rest.

"I think the good news is that the MSC won't suffer because of the current economic issues," he told reporters after discussions with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad here today.

He said he was satisfied with the way the government was tackling the currency and economic (problems).

Hewlett Packard has two companies operating in the MSC, a 750 sq km zone located south of Kuala Lumpur and designated as the hub for the development of multimedia products and services in the country.

Hewlett Packard's first company in the MSC is involved in management and operations development while the second one is engaged in software activities.

For the second company, he said : "We are considering expanding the activities for software for the internet multimedia and things like that."

On his meeting with the prime minister, Platt said they talked about the MSC in general, its development and issues discussed during the Second IAP meetings held in Cyberjaya last month, which he was unable to attend.

In addition, they also discussed bringing in Hewlett Packard's internet mentoring programme called "E-mentoring" whereby the company's employees would mentor young people keen in information technology via the internet.

The programme, started four years ago, has already attracted 1,500 Hewlett Packard employees worldwide on a voluntary basis.

"With about 300 employees in Kuala Lumpur and several thousands in Penang we have the opportunity of have quite a large mentoring programme here," explained Platt. -- BERNAMA

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