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Optimism over economy

MEMBERS of the International Advisory Panel (IAP) of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) are optimistic about the long-term growth of Malaysia and the Asean countries.

Motorola Corp chairman Gary Tooker said the IAP members feel that the crisis "is a thing of the past" and are optimistic about the work ethics, dedication, willingness to save and the creativity of the Malaysians.

"That is why (Motorola) has been investing in Malaysia for the last 25 years," Tooker told reporters yesterday during lunch break at Cyberjaya in Selangor where the International Advisory Panel (IAP) meeting is being held.

Tooker and 12 other members of the IAP are in Kuala Lumpur for the two-day meeting on the progress of the MSC.

Tooker attributed the optimism to the proactive leadership showed by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Dr Mahathir, he said, has taken the lead role throughout Asean to discuss the currency problem with the European Community and the US.

Anwar's recent visit to Japan, he said, also showed positive results.

Motorola, which is expected to invest between US\$10 million and US\$15 million (US\$1 = RM3.80) in the first stage of the MSC, will have to disperse and consolidate some of its current operations once the MSC contracts are awarded.

Tooker described Motorola's investments in the MSC as "an extension of our investments in Kuala Lumpur and Penang. Our optimism in Malaysia will continue and we will continue with our expansion."

Motorola, he said, will be involved in the smartcard and smart school programmes.

The MSC project is important not only for Malaysia but can also have a global impact as to how to move forward in the information technology world.

"Decisions have to be made when the contracts are awarded and we are optimistic."

On the IAP meeting, Tooker said the members are reviewing the project and there were several presentations by companies on their businesses and their outlook on the MSC.

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