

04 MAR 1998

'MICROSOFT COMMITTED TO CREATING GREATER AWARENESS OF IT LOCALLY'

KUALA LUMPUR, March 4 (Bernama) -- Microsoft is committed to creating a greater awareness among Malaysians on the importance of technology in enhancing the quality of life.

"As a technology company, we know what technology can do. We try to convey it to the broader community," said Microsoft (M) Sdn Bhd general manager Benedict Lee.

One of the ways to enhance awareness among the public is to expose them to information technology tools, like computers, he said in an interview ahead of Microsoft chairman and chief executive officer Bill Gates' visit here later in the month.

Lee said that while there are still people who are computer-shy or techno-phobic he believes that given more exposure, perceptions will change.

"Once people get the exposure we can then build up the momentum (more usage of technology). Technology is getting easier and easier and there is nothing to fear from it," he said.

Microsoft will continue to innovate as long as the giant software company sees that it can produce something that will benefit the people, community, business and government, he added.

Before the country fully embraces the information age people of all walks of life need to participate in the technology at an affordable manner, he said, pointing out that "it is not good to implement something which only a certain segment can participate."

To show its commitment, he said, Microsoft will share its technology with local partners, who can build up their own business by using Microsoft technology and then disseminate the technology to the broader community.

"Microsoft partners know the technology. They know how to design, operate, maintain and implement. They can train people (customers)," he added.

According to Lee, Gates is expected to introduce some of the latest technologies which are applicable to the private and public sectors when he visits Malaysia.

During his visit, Gates is expected to convey his feedback to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the Multimedia Super Corridor's initiatives and discuss Microsoft's involvement in the MSC.

Lee said Gates will also touch on advancements such as the Digital Nervous System (DNS), Connected Learning Community and Web Lifestyle.

The advancements are part of Gates' vision of the future which will change the way people, students, businesses and governments relate to one another.

The DNS helps chief executive officers to coordinate their internal operations more efficiently with better access of information vital to the company.

The Connected Learning Community is more towards human resources where teachers, children and parents are involved.

The Web Lifestyle promotes digital information and feed-in to allow transactions and daily activities to be done without having to go through a "hassle" situation. -- BERNAMA

LES HAK GC