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INCOFIRM-LUCERN

INCOFIRM TIES UP WITH LUCENT TO BRING FIBRE OPTIC NETWORK TO SABAH

By: Muammar Kamaruddin

KOTA KINABALU, Feb 19 (Bernama) -- Incofirm Communications Sdn Bhd today signed an agreement to team up with Lucent Technologies (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd to develop a fibre optic network in Sabah, known as Sabah Duct System.

Mohd Yussof Nair, Incofirm's managing director, told Bernama after the signing that the 1,200 km network which would cost RM500 million would cover areas within Kota Kinabalu, Tawau, Sandakan and Labuan.

He said that the development of the network would be carried out in three-phases with the first phase expected to be completed within nine months.

Incofirm has been granted a 30-year concession by the Sabah state government to build the fibre optic network on build, operate and transfer basis (BOT), added Mohd Yussof.

Once the infrastructure is completed, the network's line would be leased out to telecommunications and multimedia services providers.

"With the network being built by a single company, the people will not be burdened with companies trenching roads to build networks alongside each other's, and causing disruptions to traffic. Service providers only have to buy capacity from Incofirm," he said.

The successful completion of the Sabah Duct System would see the establishment of a state-of-the-art fibre optic telecommunications infrastructure in Sabah that would support the state's progress in the information technology era, added Mohd Yussof.

At the signing, Mohd Yussof represented Incofirm, while Lucent Technologies Malaysia was represented by its president David Marinelli.

The signing was witnessed by prime minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Sabah's chief minister, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok.

David Marinelli, president of Lucent Technologies Malaysia said at the moment, the company is doing the design and preliminary work for the first phase of the network.

The installation part would be undertaken by contractors who would be appointed by Incofirm, said Edmond Wei, managing director network cable systems Asia/Pacific, Lucent Technologies Asia/Pacific Ltd.

Apart from designing the network, Mohd Yussof said Lucent would also contribute about US\$100 million (US\$1 = RM3.80) for the development of the network.

Lucent Technologies Malaysia is a member company of Lucent Technologies Inc of the United States, which designs, builds and delivers a wide range of public and private networks, communication systems and software and data networking systems. -- BERNAMA

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