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Mahathir-MSc

HIGH NUMBER OF MSC COMPANIES REFLECTS FAITH IN PROJECT - DR M

KUALA LUMPUR, July 6 (Bernama) -- The high number of companies awarded Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) status to date reflects their faith in the project despite the economic slowdown, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The number of MCS companies has risen to 228, with 32 of them world class operations, the prime minister said at a press conference after launching Siemens Futurel@b at the Kuala Lumpur City Centre.

"We are ahead of schedule," he said in relation to the target to have 50 world class companies by the year 2003.

"This indicates that people believe in Malaysia and we understand the usefulness of MSC as a test bed."

Dr Mahathir said that the companies had not lost their faith in the project because the government had kept up and given priority to the MSC project.

Meanwhile, Siemens Electrical Engineering Sdn Bhd chief executive officer Rainer Althoff said Siemens, the largest German company in Malaysia, had an unwavering commitment in the country, in whatever economic condition.

"We at Siemens are not fair-weathered friends. We are here to stay, in good and bad times."

Siemens would continue to expand its business in Malaysia and was seeking to double its business volume over the next three years, he said.

Siemens's involvement in Malaysia spanned over three decades and its commitment to the country was reflected by an accumulated investment of over US\$6 billion (US\$1 = RM3.8) in different activities, Althoff said.

He said Siemens' business volume in this country reached US\$1.4 billion in the 1997/1998 fiscal year.

Out of the group's total investment for this year, Siemens would spend more than RM20 million in its MSC engagement.

Siemens' involvement in the MSC is undertaken through Siemens Multimedia Sdn Bhd, a MSC-status company.

Futurel@b is a Siemens' information and communication networks facility and training centre. It provides customised end-to-end solutions for all information and communication needs.

It offers complete network solutions which include electronic commerce, Internet banking, video conferencing, video on demand, telecollaboration, telemedicine and web-tv. It also offers professional training courses and consultancy services.

The centre, which is the first of its kind in Asia and one of the best in the world, will be pivotal in technology transfer to the local industry, consultancy and training supports in the use of existing and future oriented applications in the world of multimedia.

Siemens is the leading telecommunication and information technology vendor in the world. It has two factories in Malaysia which are engaged in the production of semiconductor and opto-electronic products.

Siemens is also a supplier of products related to power generation, power transmission, information technology, transportation, communications, medical, engineering, fire and securities systems, and others.

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