

06 JUL 1999

MAHATHIR-MSK

HIGH NUMBER OF MSC-STATUS COMPANIES REFLECTS FAITH IN MSC

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

The number of MSC companies has risen to 228, with 32 being world class operations, the Prime Minister said at a press conference after launching Siemens Future@b at the Kuala Lumpur City Centre here.

"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 believed in Malaysia and we understand the usefulness of MSC as a test bed."

Dr Mahathir said that the companies have not lost their faith in the project because the government has 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, has 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 aims to double its business volume over the next three years, he added.

Siemens's involvement in Malaysia spans over three decades and its commitment to the country is 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.

Future@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, would 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. -- BERNAMA

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