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Smart Labs to be first in lead-up to Cyberjaya launch

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CYBERJAYA, Mon. - The Multimedia Super Corridor is progressing ahead of schedule and is set to reach several milestones next month, leading up to the launch of Cyberjaya on July 8.

The first event will be the launch of "Smart Labs" of Sekolah Menengah Dengkil and Sekolah Rendah Dengkil on June 29.

The project, under the Multimedia Development Corporation's Adopt-A-School programme, is expected to benefit 430 students, the company's executive director and chief operating officer Dr Mohamed Arif Nun told a Press conference today at Cyberview Lodge here.

Some of the milestones coming up:

\* July 1: the MSC Central Incubator at the Multimedia University will open its doors to aspiring "techno-preneurs" and start up technological companies;

\* July 3: Telekom Malaysia Bhd officially commissions its Cyberjaya telecommunications exchange CBJ2 and the completion of half of its 27,000 sq metre headquarter complex.

(Telekom Malaysia, which is supplying the fibre-optic backbone for the MSC, has allocated RM200 million for 1998 and 1999, and is committing RM2 billion for the MSC's infrastructure until 2006).

\* July 8: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will launch the RM2.2 billion "intelligent city" Cyberjaya in conjunction with the opening of the Third MSC International Advisory Panel meeting;

\* July 9: Launch of the Multimedia University, which receives its first batch of 2,000 students. It is planned to have capacity for 20,000.

Dr Mahathir will also launch the research and development centre of Nippon Telegraph & Telephone MSC Sdn Bhd - the Japan-based NTT's second-largest R&D facility after the US.

Since 1996, 279 companies have applied for MSC status, 216 have been approved and another 29 are under consideration.

Of the successful companies, 45 per cent are wholly owned by locals, 22 per cent foreign-local joint ventures and two per cent foreign joint ventures.

The rest are European-owned (12 per cent), American (eight per cent), Japanese (three per cent), Canadian (one per cent) and other countries (seven per cent).

By sector, they are divided into software (36 per cent), content (19 per cent), systems integration (16 per cent), telecommunications (10 per cent), post-production animation/film (eight per cent), electronics (six per cent), training/education (three per cent) and heavy users (three per cent).

Other key indicators - there are now 139 MSC companies in operation, compared to 94 two years ago.

From January 1997 to March this year, they invested RM1.19 billion in their operations, generating RM4 billion in revenue and RM600 million in profits.

"They also employed almost 10,000 knowledge workers so far," he said.

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