

04/04/2000

DPM: No fanciful projections

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KAJANG, Mon. - Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today said he hoped the estimated investments of RM26.4 billion by 303 Multimedia Super Corridor status companies were not merely fanciful projections on business plans.

The Deputy Prime Minister said it was his hope that these investment estimates were realised.

"I hope these investment estimates will be realised by the MSC companies and not merely be fanciful projections on business plans," he said.

Abdullah said this at the launch of Net-Linx Asia Pacific headquarters here today.

Also present was Net Linx Asia Pacific president Holm Hallbauer.

The Multimedia Development Corporation estimates that between 1997 and 2004 the total amount of investments by the 303 MSC status companies will amount to RM26.4 billion.

Abdullah said despite the recent regional economic crisis, the Malaysian Government never wavered in its commitment towards the MSC project, the nation's central vehicle in its push to create a knowledge economy (K-economy).

"Even during the recession which brought our economy to its knees, the Government did not think twice about delaying the implementation of the MSC.

"We had made some budget cuts but the Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) said there should not be any cuts in the development of Cyberjaya and Putrajaya," he said.

He said it was also his hope that more MSC-status companies or those to be included in the group will soon move to Cyberjaya, the nerve-centre of the MSC.

This he said will allow companies, which have yet to relocate or have not planned to do so, to take advantage of the new offices, residential complexes and facilities being completed around Cyberjaya.

He said the MDC had given him the assurance that the development of retail and entertainment areas would be ready by year-end and this would attract more companies to the area.

At the moment, he said there were 34 international world-class companies in the MSC, a 750 sq km area stretching from the Kuala Lumpur City Centre to the KL International Airport in Sepang.

Abdullah also urged local funds to provide greater capital market access and managerial expertise to new MSC status companies.

"The Government is trying to encourage the growth of such start-ups not merely through the various benefits that the MSC provides.

"We are providing better access to capital markets for emerging dot.coms and other technology related companies," he said.

Abdullah added that the 2000 Budget earmarked RM500 million from the Government and the private sector for the financing of high technology ventures.

Abdullah said over a third of the MSC status companies were start-ups and that more such local entities should be set up.

"In the new economy, often the younger talented technopreneurs spearheading small and medium enterprises are those with winning ideas," he said.

On another note, Abdullah said the rapid pace set by the developed world in information and communication technology (ICT) should not deter Asian

countries from developing their own ICTs and other knowledge-based sectors.

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