

09/06/2000

Dr M invites Matsushita to participate in big way in MSC

Hardev Kaur in Tokyo

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has invited Japanese multinational Matsushita to "participate in a big way" in the Multimedia Super Corridor.

Describing the MSC as a "very special place", Dr Mahathir said it is an area where investors, those who have been given MSC status, are accorded certain privileges.

In extending the invitation, Dr Mahathir hoped that Malaysians would be able to learn from the conglomerate, especially in areas of research.

"I know that you are very advanced in your research and it is our hope that we would be able to learn more from you both in terms of technology and management," the Prime Minister told the senior management of Matsushita yesterday.

"We hope to learn in areas that we are lacking," he added.

Malaysia's relationship with the Japanese company began very early in 1965 and since then its investments and presence in Malaysia have grown.

Matsushita Electric Industrial Co Ltd executive vice-president Masayuki Matsushita in his welcoming remarks said Matsushita's total production in Malaysia is about RM9 billion, employing some 30,000 people. Exports from its Malaysian facilities have risen to RM7 billion.

Dr Mahathir noted that in addition to increased exports, Matsushita's facilities had also benefited in terms of spinoffs and improving the smaller and medium-sized industries and improved technology.

The Prime Minister visited the Matsushita Multimedia Centre in Tokyo and was briefed on the latest technological developments. During the visit he was shown and briefed on the Home Information Infrastructure (HII) centre, a high technology home of the future.

In response to a question, Dr Mahathir said he hoped that something would come out of the visit "as we want to learn from you as well be involved in information technology".

Earlier, in his welcoming remarks, Matsushita said the company would focus more on developing network consumer electric and electronic products and systems and creating new lifestyles in a digital network society in the 21st century.

"Through these activities, we would like to make further contributions to the progress and development of society," he added.

Matsushita also thanked the Prime Minister for his encouragement and support which had enabled the company to expand its business operations in Malaysia.

(END)