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Motorola endorses Malaysia's policies

Ahmad A. Talib; Mustapha Kamil in Chicago

GIANT US high-technology company Motorola has endorsed the Malaysian Government's policies and pledged to continue to jointly develop the nation's ability based on its 28-year presence in the country.

The company presented a model schooner as a symbolic memento to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during the latter's visit to its headquarters in Schaumburg, Illinois, on Saturday.

Its message to the Prime Minister: "Have a smooth journey, you are in control".

In receiving Dr Mahathir at its headquarters, Motorola chairman and chief executive Christopher B. Galvin said the company would soon move its Malaysian operations from Petaling Jaya to Cyberjaya.

Briefing the Malaysian entourage, Motorola executive vice-president and president of its Asia-Pacific operations C.D. Tam said the company, renowned for its wireless communications technology, considered Malaysia a significant investment.

Going by the number of employees, Malaysia was second only to China with 8,717 workers.

Tam said Malaysia was set to become the company's showcase in its "web without wires" technology development. The development concerns combining wireless communication capabilities and the Internet.

In thanking the host at a luncheon later, Dr Mahathir spoke of Malaysia's appreciation of Motorola's continued investment in the country, and hoped the company would not only employ local workers but also train them.

He said the fruits of such a partnership between the company and the Malaysian Government were showing as many of those employed by Motorola were now sent to train people elsewhere.

He hoped for a stronger relationship between Motorola and Malaysia's Multimedia University.

During the visit, Dr Mahathir was shown various Motorola products and those still under development.

They include the company's latest voice-operated technology for Internet application and third-generation mobile communications technology applicable, among others, in the medical field.

Dr Mahathir was also shown and was impressed with the company's development of a product for use in precision agriculture, including soil analysis.

Malaysia is looking for ways to reduce its import of food items, the single largest component of its overall import bill.

Dr Mahathir has been pushing for high-technology and integrated farming in Malaysia for some time.

He said he liked to visit the headquarters of large foreign direct investors in Malaysia. "I want to get to know them better."

Today's visit to the company headquarters was one of the items in the Prime Minister's busy schedule in Chicago. He was accompanied by Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali.

Others in the Malaysian delegation include Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad, Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd chief executive Tengku Tan Sri Mahaleel Tengku Ariff, Permodalan Nasional Berhad chief executive Datuk Hamad Kama Piah Che Othman and Malayan Banking managing director Datuk Amirsham Abdul Aziz.

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