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Mahathir-Forum

MSC TO LEAD MALAYSIA INTO INFORMATION AGE, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, March 29 (Bernama) -- The Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) will lead the way for Malaysia to graduate into the information age and knowledge-based economy (K-economy), Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said MSC initiatives have provided many K-economy enablers to flourish with the ready pool of knowledge workers created with the existence of MSC-located universities, world-class communication facilities, venture funding and incubator centre network.

Speaking at the opening of the MSC-Lucent Bell Laboratory Technology 2001 Forum here, Dr Mahathir said as the world moved away from commodity-based trading to electronic trading, innovation, research and development and, the role of knowledge workers were becoming key elements in the new economic model.

He said as such, Malaysia must continue to focus its efforts in encouraging entrepreneur skills with venture fund support.

Graduates should also be equipped with skills and knowledge that was in line with the changes in the market and the way business was done, he added.

Dr Mahathir said the emergence of knowledge societies have been central in driving the growth in international trade and towards national wealth creation.

"I hope we have all gained a better understanding and insight of potential opportunities, challenges and form new partnerships and alliances to enable us to successfully prosper in the emerging K-economy," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia would gain significantly as one of the spin-offs expected was the collaboration in research and development (R&D) activities, in the computing and telecommunication field and among local universities and business organisations with centres of excellence around the globe.

"One such example is the R&D activities carried out at the Multimedia University, which benefits from the Lucent Bell Laboratories Visiting Professorship Programme," he said.

On the forum, Dr Mahathir hoped local scientists and corporate executives would interact and network with scientists and technologists from Lucent and Bell Laboratories on a broad range of technologies, particularly in telecommunication and computing.

"The forum will also serve as a platform for smart partnerships amongst the industry driven R&D centres and as a guide to assist Malaysian companies and universities to define strategic issues, directions and focus in their R&D activities," he said.

"In spite of all the recent changes in Lucent, I am very happy that Lucent has continued to show its tremendous support for the MSC through its various commitments," said Dr Mahathir.

President of Bell Labs Dr Arun Netravali, 1998 Nobel Prize laureate in Physics Dr Horst Stormer and executive chairman of Multimedia Development Corporation Tan Sri Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah will be among the guest speakers at the one-day forum entitled "Expect Great Things - Technologies Powering K-Economy".

Lucent Technologies (M) Sdn Bhd became the 100th company to obtain the MSC status in January 1998.

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