

Technopreneur on talent hunt here

Net - 7 JAN 2009

Avaz may set up R&D centre in MSC

By Fazli Ibrahim

fazli@nstp.com.my

TECHNOPKENEUR Safi Qureshey's quest for new talent brought him to Malaysia recently.

The former CEO of AST Research Inc has been keeping a low profile since the company changed hands, focusing his energies on developing new applications in the field of telecommunications.

At the same time, Qureshey is also at the forefront of developing new research talents in the IT industry through his new set-up, Avaz Networks, which is based in California.

Qureshey has met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and discussed the possibility of setting up a research and development facility in Malaysia's own Multimedia Super Corridor on the same lines of its present centre in Islamabad, Pakistan.

"The Prime Minister has highlighted Malaysia's need to develop knowledge workers. We want to replicate the model we have in Pakistan. We started with six people who studied in the US and came back to share their expertise and now we have more than 200 talented young people," he said in an interview in Kuala Lumpur recently.

He attended talks with officials from Universiti Malaya to highlight the possibility of using the institution as a platform to achieve this goal.

"We want to work with locals to develop the same research and development set-up. We give to our interns some real challenging problems we want solved and explore new things."

He added that the company will be providing the initial technical support and know-how for the set-up, which is expected to be an MSC status company.

"We want to train and recruit our people locally, but the scale of the set-up would depend very much on the projects we are working on at the time. Gradually, we will scale back on the number of outside experts as the number of locals trained increases."

He said the three main factors that attract technological investors to a country are the infrastructure, availability of local talent and domestic market for products.

He added the trip to Malaysia is also to offer expertise in cutting edge technology to local and international firms in Malaysia, especially in the telecommunications field.

"Our solutions are able to deliver high speed data and telephone communications at a significantly lower cost. For the IP's, the main issue is the quality of service and reliability with solutions that integrate all three environments."