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PENANG-INDUSTRIAL

PENANG TO ACHIEVE SECOND INDUSTRIAL LEAP BY 2010, SAYS EXPERT

PENANG, Aug 27 (Bernama) -- Penang is expected to achieve its second industrial leap to become one of the country's most competitive industrial states by year 2010.

An international management writer and researcher William H. Davidson said international investors are confident that the Penang state government would overcome the difficulties posed by globalisation.

"Now is a very challenging time but Penang is doing well in overcoming such difficulties," he told reporters after delivering his presentation on "Strategies for Penang's Second Leap" at a seminar on "Growing With Penang" here today.

He said Penang has already taken some action on specific programmes for industrial development such as establishing the telecommunication infrastructure and e-commerce platform.

Davidson also suggested several moves for Penang to enhance its industrial strategy, including linking Penang to other hubs and highlighting the skills of its manpower.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said collaboration between industries and universities in Penang would enhance the state's research and development (R&D) and design capacity.

The Collaborative Research Centre (CRC) set up recently was aimed at promoting R&D collaboration in the electrical and electronics (E&E), information and communication technology (ICT) and biotechnology sectors.

"It also can be achieved through the synergy between transnational corporations (TNCs), small and medium industries (SMIs) and the Penang Skills Development Centre (PSDC)," Dr Koh said when delivering his keynote address.

PSDC is an industry-driven fraternity for synergy in training skills, promoting technology transfer, broadening SMI development through the Global Supplier Programme (GSP), upgrading Supply Chain Management through the RosettaNet, and building team spirit.

He said Penang, despite its great success of 30 years of industrial growth, has to do more for its industries by consolidating the present niches and exploring new ones.

The present niches are high-end and pilot manufacturing, ICT design, wireless and mobile devices and call centres while the new niches would be photonics, software applications, bio-informatics and marine biotech.

Dr Koh said Penang would also enhance the productiveness, versatility and resourcefulness of its workforce.

This could be achieved by enhancing English-language proficiency in the technical workforce for realtime technology transfer as well as harnessing the state's multi-lingual capabilities and multi-cultural connections.

The seminar was organised by the state government in conjunction with the 30th anniversary celebration of the electronics industry in Penang.

About 700 people attended the seminar which was followed by a State Recognition Lunch graced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who delivered his keynote address. -- BERNAMA

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