

# More skilled jobs

## Higher-paying and knowledge-based workers for MSC Phase 2

by Jimmy Yeow and Ng Kar Yean

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who pushed for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) seven years ago, now wants the project's second phase to create more highly-skilled jobs.

The prime minister said under phase two from now to 2010, Malaysia wants more higher-paying jobs, which means those that are highly-skilled and knowledge-based.

"That's the way we go. We can increase our pay by going on strikes and demanding higher pay but that is not going to last very long as we would be losing our competitiveness," he said yesterday.

Under phase two, he said hi-tech corridors, similar to the MSC, will be

established in Malaysia.

He added that the MSC would be linked to other cyber-cities in the country, which would be set up later, and also worldwide.

The MSC is a 15km by 50km corridor stretching from the Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur to the KL International Airport in Sepang. It was set up to attract leading companies to locate their multimedia industries there.

Speaking at a news conference at the MSC Seventh International Advisory Panel (IAP) meeting in Cyberjaya, he said: "Previously, we were concentrating on creating jobs, any job, so that Malaysians can find employment.

"Now, we want Malaysians to go for higher paying jobs. For that they must be willing to learn and contribute more."

Mahathir said the government is getting

advice from the 31 IAP members and representatives for the second phase.

To a question, he said the government will consider extending the incentives enjoyed by MSC-status companies in Cyberjaya to other cyber centres, as a way to expand the MSC.

He expected the companies in MSC to create about 21,000 jobs this year, from 17,000 jobs last year.

The prime minister said the MSC has exceeded its targets.

"We had targeted 500 MSC status companies by 2003 but now there are 923 of such companies. For the world-class companies, we had targeted 30, but now there are 59."

He added that the MSC companies are expected to generate RM5.85 billion in sales this year, from the RM4 billion last year. - theedgedaily.com