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CYBERJAYA-DEVELOPMENT  
24-HOUR FACILITIES FOR WORKERS IN CYBERJAYA

CYBERJAYA, Aug 9 (Bernama) -- Plans are in the works to turn Cyberjaya into a vibrant intelligent city with round-the-clock facilities for those working and staying there, the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovations, Datuk Dr Jamaludin Jarjis, said today.

"Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has instructed the development of Cyberjaya to be revisited to make it a vibrant town," he said at a press conference after witnessing a tripartite memorandum of understanding (MoU) signing here.

Dr Jamaludin said that the town would see a lively working area for employees, who have to work in shifts in Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC)-status companies, especially those related to the shared sources and outsourcing (SSO) industry.

The idea is to create 24-hour facilities to shop and eat, apart from entertainment, that also formed part of the moves to continuously attract multinational companies to the MSC, he said.

"We are already in the third placing (after China and India) in the A.T. Kearney's global offshore Location Attractive Index (OLAI), ahead of the Philippines, Ireland, Singapore and Thailand.

"To remain at number three or move a notch higher, we need to create a lively working area," Dr Jamaludin said.

The MoU saw Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC), Malaysia Debt Ventures (MDV) and Association of the Computer and Multimedia Industry of Malaysia (PIKOM), teaming up for a more collaborative efforts to take advantage of the global outsourcing phenomenon.

Cyberjaya, Malaysia's first truly intelligent city, was officially launched by former Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on July 8, 1999.

Covering 2,894 hectares (7,000 acres) of land, the city is the nucleus of the country's vision for the next millennium, the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

Dr Jamaludin explained that the SSO was currently the largest sector in the MSC, registering over RM1 billion investments and creating almost 7,000 jobs.

Companies that operate their shared services hub in the MSC includes BMW, DHL, HSBC and Shell.

"One international airline is presently thinking of choosing Malaysia to outsource their business, thus providing another 500 to 600 jobs.

"The growth of this industry has been so dramatic in recent years that by 2008, it is expected that the global shared services will be worth an estimated US\$500 billion (RM1,900 billion)," Dr Jamaludin added.

For the MSC, the target was to create 60,000 jobs in the SSO by 2008, of which at least 20 percent of the jobs would be created by Malaysian companies.

One strategy that could help spur greater growth in SSO in the country was for the public-listed companies to provide the financial capital to local entrepreneurs and existing domestic SSO companies, he said.

"Why not the public-listed companies apportioned five to 10 percent of their profits and link up with entities like MDV, which has the expertise to identify SSO companies that need funds to grow," he said.

MDV is Asia's first-ever provider of project debt-financing scheme.

Armed with a RM1.6 billion Information and Communications Technology

(ICT) Fund, it has to-date approved a total of 51 applications worth about RM960 million of which 38 applications have been disbursed, valued at around RM687 million.

On another note, Dr Jamaludin said that the eighth MSC's International Advisory Panel (IAP) meeting would be held from Sept 1 to 4.

To-date, 15 IAP members and 16 IAP members' representatives have confirmed their attendance.

"The Prime Minister will officiate the meeting on Thursday, Sept 2 and the delegates will start coming in from Wednesday.

"Some of the new features of the IPA meeting are MSC Technopreneur Forum and Business Summit on Outsourcing to be held concurrently with the four-day event.

"In addition, there will be break-out session for the meetings to discuss on specific ICT issues like the way forward for ICT, outsourcing and convergence of ICT and biotechnology," he added. -- BERNAMA

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