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MAHATHIR-INVESTMENT

IS DR MAHATHIR ALSO MALAYSIA'S TOP "SALESMAN"?

PENANG, April 22 (Bernama) -- Is Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's Malaysia's top "salesman"?

The answer is a resounding "yes" if the accounts of the countless number of satisfied foreign investors are anything to go by.

Take Thomas C. Loomis, for example. He is president of SPM (M) Sdn Bhd (SPM Malaysia), a subsidiary of San Diego-based SEMX Corporation, a leading broadband component and interconnect solutions for wireless, fibre optics and Internet infrastructure company, operating from the Bayan Lepas Free Trade Zone here.

Loomis' company decided to expand its operations in Malaysia after hearing the prime minister speak at a Malaysia Corporate Day function in New York on Feb 4 this year.

SPM Malaysia, which was established in Penang in 1999, is to move its high-end technologies in Thermal Management Products (TMP) and Packages to Penang from San Diego in California by the end of the year.

"It was people like him (Dr Mahathir) that afford companies like ours to participate in with minimal fear of failure," he told a gathering of government officials, business associates and employees at the opening of SPM's new facility here by state executive councillor Dr Teng Hock Nan and the company's achievement of QS-9000 Certification.

"I want to publicly thank him for reaffirming this situation as I witnessed many opportunities here in Malaysia to grow our business with government guidance and support, along with partnerships with other corporate companies."

Loomis said during the New York function, Dr Mahathir had talked about numerous validated points of the efforts within Malaysia to provide business and social opportunities to all people of the world.

He praised the Malaysian government for instilling confidence among

foreign investors to keep their investments in the country by providing the social and political stability.

"Malaysia is the right place to be and I'm glad that SEMX had made the right choice to continue its investments in this country, especially in Penang," he stressed.

SEMX president-cum-chief executive officer Frank J. Polese said Polese Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of SEMX, would place TMP and packages technologies at a newly-built facility of SPM Malaysia.

He said the decision to move the technologies of TMP and packages to Penang was due to the corporation's confidence in the capability of the Malaysian government in maintaining economic, social and political stability.

SPM Malaysia would also be the springboard for continuous growth for other SEMX units in the future, he said.

Malaysia, Polese said, would also become SEMX's marketing centre for TMP and packages for the Asian region.

SPM Malaysia, incorporated in Malaysia three years ago, started operations in Penang from a leased building measuring 6,000 sq ft. It produces microelectronic packaging materials like the silicon aluminium bonding wires, heavy aluminium and solder wires for the semiconductor, automotive and electronics industries.

SEMX had since invested a total of RM14 million at its Penang operations which is also responsible for the sale and distribution of its products. It also offers technical and logistics support to all its customers within the Asia region. -- BERNAMA

ZU SHY