

Cyberjaya's City Command Centre marks another world's first!

Setia Haruman Sdn Bhd has been awarded a turnkey contract worth RM48 million by the Malaysian Government to design and build phase one of the Cyberjaya's City Command Centre (CCC), the city's single control and monitoring hub.

The signing ceremony between Malaysian Administration and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU) with Setia Haruman Sdn Bhd was held in Cyberjaya, on December 12, 2001. MAMPU is the government agency designated to oversee the successful implementation of the CCC project.

"It's the Government's expectation that the CCC will function as a one-stop service for all municipality and community services in Cyberjaya, including integrated billing, payments and complaints, among other things," said MAMPU director general Dato' Dr Muhammad Rais Abd Karim.

The realisation of the CCC will signal the birth of the world's first of such system to implement a fully integrated service for both municipality and community services. It enables all aspects of services for the community to be managed, controlled and monitored in sequential and coordinated manner, using information and communication technology (ICT).

"It is hoped that with the CCC in place, Cyberjaya will not only provide

maximum convenience and high standard of living for the residents but also an environment that is fully conducive towards exacerbating the growth of ICT in industries," Dato' Rais further added.

Dato' Haji Abdul Karim, chief executive officer of Setia Haruman, commented, "I believe today's agreement will mark the beginning of better 'soft infrastructure' availability, an aspect that has often been cited by critics as lacking in Cyberjaya."

"The CCC was initiated in September 1999 and the implementation of the total CCC will be done in stages, with Phase One of the project targeted for completion by August 2002," he said.

The citywide broadband network in Cyberjaya will enable the community to be connected to the CCC at all times. Apart from Internet connection, residents will be able to access the CCC service via telephone, wireless, as well as drive through and walk-in counter service. ●





APMITTA Renamed The MSC-APICTA

Tiga Events Sdn Bhd, a wholly owned subsidiary of TV3, has pledged to co-organise this year's MSC-Asia Pacific ICT Awards 2001 (MSC-APICTA), together with the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC).

Anthony Firdaus Bujang, Director of Tiga Events, handed over a cheque of RM100,000 to Tan Sri Dato' Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah, executive chairman of MDC and chairman of the Asia Pacific ICT Awards (APICTA) during an event held on January 29, 2002. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between both parties.

At the same event, Tan Sri Othman also officially renamed the Asia Pacific MSC Information Technology and Telecommunications Awards (APMITTA) to MSC-Asia Pacific ICT Awards (MSC-APICTA).

The MSC-APICTA is an annual event held to recognise the outstanding achievements of Malaysian ICT entrepreneurs and their contributions to the MSC. It is open to individuals, students, organisations, associations as well as companies.

During the APICTA in September 2001, Malaysian ICT companies managed to secure six out of eleven awards against international participants from other Asia Pacific countries like South Korea, Brunei, Hong Kong and Australia.

"We have seen a steady growth in the number of nominations from 197 in 1999 to 207 in 2000 and for MSC-APICTA 2001, I am proud to announce that the number of nominations has increased to 231," said Othman.

"We are very excited by the response and the support that we've been receiving for the awards. It's not just the awards that is important, it's also the networking that stems from it. We are having this awards also as a matter of goodwill for our corporate citizenship. We would like to see a positive growth of innovative SMEs in Malaysia as well as the region and hope to get continued support from more sponsors," he added.

According to the MoU, Tiga Events Sdn Bhd will handle the event management, producing a television promotion for the event, and broadcast the TV promotion on TV3. "We have a very wide audience and believe that we can promote this event to more people," said Anthony.

For the MSC-APICTA 2002, other major sponsors included SilverLake Systems Sdn Bhd, Digi Telecommunications Sdn Bhd, Microsoft Malaysia Sdn Bhd and Asia Pacific Institute of Information Technology Sdn Bhd. ●



MDC Executive Chairman is Director of the Year 2001

Tan Sri Dato' Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah, executive chairman of the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) received the prestigious 'Director of the Year' award from the Malaysian Institute of Directors (MID). The award was presented by Primary Industries Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yeik, during the MID annual dinner held at Sunway Lagoon Resort Hotel held on November 16, 2001.

Before taking up his current appointment at MDC, Tan Sri Othman served 31 years in the civil service. He held a number of positions notably as Deputy Secretary General in the Ministry of Education, Secretary General in the Ministry of Energy, Telecommunications and Posts, and Secretary General in the Ministry of Primary Industries.

Three others were awarded the MID Academy of Fellows. They were Employees' Provident Fund chairman Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali, Southern Bank Bhd chief executive director Datuk Tan Teong Hean and Kuala Lumpur Kepong Bhd executive chairman Datuk Lee Oi Hian.

In his speech at the dinner, Dr Lim urged companies to generate more domestic activities and reduce dependency on imported materials.

"This will provide our small-and-medium-industries with the platform to market their products and services. More efforts in the information and communication technology and knowledge economy is also needed," he stressed. ●

MSC Technology Forum Discusses Biotech Research & Business Opportunities

Recognising the growing importance and potential contributions of biotechnology, the MSC Technology Forum held on December 12, 2001 at the Cyberview Lodge Resort concentrated on discussing the topic of 'New Research and Business Opportunities in IT and Biotechnology'.

Organised by the Technology and Policy Research department (TPR) of the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC), the forum was truly an eye-opener for those who are less informed of the developments and opportunities that biotechnology has to offer.

The invited speakers were a mix of academicians and industry players namely, Dr Avvari V. Mohan of Multimedia University (MMU), Mohd Faridduin of Biodata Information Technology, Dr Suhaimi Napis from the Department of Biotechnology of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Lee Fook Lin of PUC Founder, and Dr Loh Wai Lung from Topf MSC.

Presentations that followed highlighted that the opportunities for research and development lie mainly in the areas of molecular bioinformatics, agroinformatics, medical informatics and chemical informatics.

As for businesses, the main opportunities are in establishing the backbone for the Biotech industry in terms of the hardware and software support.

According to Dr Avvari Mohan, "IT is the crucial support for the further development of the Biotech industry. Examples of IT usage in Biotech is in data processing, software for pattern finding and hardware such as supercomputers with powerful chips to do data crunching."

The importance of digitising and documenting all the biotech information was best summarised by Dr Suhaimi Napis when he said, "Malaysia wants to leapfrog into the Knowledge Economy

eWarna Technology to Power Gunzetal's Online Shade Card

MSC-status company eWarna is the chosen solutions provider by Asia's largest sewing thread producer, Gunzetal Ltd, to develop and build the world's first interactive online shade card. The contract was announced on the annual Trim Technology Day in Hong Kong on January 28, 2002.

The online shade card will offer precise reflectance readings and the colour search and difference tools of the sort usually found in high-end standalone colour management software.

"This tool will save us the constant cost of upgrading and altering shade cards whilst presenting the colours in a manner the user can search with full precision from their desktop web browser," said Gunzetal managing director Stanford Kuo. "It opens up many new market avenues for us and we are proud that we will be the first company in the world to offer this benefit to the textile supply chain."

Gunzetal Ltd is a leading worldwide supplier of high quality thread products to the apparel and non-apparel industry. The company has long been recognised as an innovative leader in the thread industry, with continuous advancement

in customer service, competitive pricing, product quality, technical support, and research & development.

Gunzetal's customers can pick target colours from a palette or by Lab value, or upload them using reflectance readings, then search the company's complete shade range for the nearest shade before deciding - using the colour difference tools - whether the shades available are close enough.

Gunzetal's web page will connect directly to data measured into eWarna's Labworks software running recipe prediction and colour QC functions in Gunzetal's dyehouses. But smaller companies without such a software, or a spectrophotometer, can still save money on producing shade cards by asking eWarna to measure or update their shades into the eWarna standard online shade card package, which provides complete search and compare tools on a web page customised to the users' presentational requirements.

On a separate note, eWarna announced the appointment of Malcolm Ball to the post of European Director, reporting to CEO Richard Lawn. Previously the Technical

Director at Donisthorpe and DMC Industrial Thread Division where he was responsible for Divisional R&D in the UK, France, Morocco and Colombia, his main responsibilities as eWarna's European Director will be to drive business development and marketing efforts for the retail supply chain in Europe as well as provide applications development support. He will be based in eWarna's office in the United Kingdom.

"Malcolm's extensive industry expertise allows him to truly understand the market and customer needs," said Lawn. "His focus and drive will continue to lead our company on a path of great opportunity and growth. I'm delighted to have someone of his calibre on our team."

Ball has a Chartered Textile Technologist Diploma from the Bolton Institute of Technology. He has been a member of the Textile Institute since 1976, joining as an Associate and eventually admitted as a Fellow in 1999. He currently serves as Technical Chairman of the Association of Suppliers to the British Clothing Industry (ASBCI). ●

or K-economy, but where's the knowledge? It is in people's head. Thus, it has to be digitised to be shared and given value."

Another opportunity for businesses in biotech is in the security technology. Mohd Fariduddin said, "The security technology capitalises on the biometrics advancement to produce security solutions such as fingerprint verification, iris scan, hand geometry, face and voice recognition. The information generated can then be linked to transaction records, users information management, human resource reports and more."

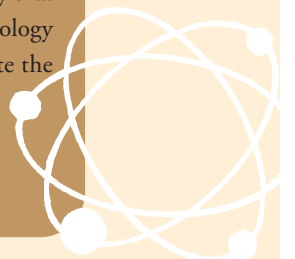
Among the other issues discussed was the difficulty in obtaining funding from venture capitalists (VC) for the much needed R&D projects as it is hard to make short term profits in the biotech industry. Most VCs demand quick returns on their investments, while the biotech R&D projects have long incubation periods and take time to produce products that can

be commercialised. Thus, VCs need to be patient when they are investing in biotech.

The MSC Technology Forum was started in year 1999 and provides a platform for knowledge sharing and discussions among industry players, academicians and the private and government sectors interested in the developments of the ICT industry.

"We plan to make this forum a quarterly event starting from year 2002 onwards. We hope that these forums would lead to more networking and R&D collaborations amongst the various ICT related sectors," explained Dr Yap, Senior Manager, TPR.

"Companies need to develop sustainable competitive advantage to survive in today's market. Intellectual property that they develop through ongoing R&D efforts and the technology that they have developed themselves can help them create the competitive advantage," said Dr Yap. ●



MDC Unveils New Media Grassroots Efforts

'New Media Grassroots', a new initiative by the National Creative Multimedia Development Project in conjunction with the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) and Asia News Broadcasting (ANB) recently had a preview of the creative multimedia projects completed by selected Malaysian students. This programme first took shape in April 2001, when the 1st E-Village International Advisory Panel meeting called for increased awareness of existing local talent in the multimedia area.

The National Creative Multimedia Development Project received tremendous support from satellite broadcasters, creative multimedia faculties of local Institutes of Higher Learning (IHL) and sponsors including Telekom Malaysia Berhad, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, KUB Malaysia Berhad, Hewlett-Packard, Oracle, Ingenuity Microsystems, Global Knowledge Incubator and Southern Bank Berhad. The local education institutes who took part in this programme include Multimedia University, One Academy, Lim Kok Wing Institute Of Creative Technologies, INTI, FINAS, Multimedia Institute of Integrative Media and MTDC Multimedia Academy.

Tan Sri Dato' Dr Othman Yeop Abdullah executive chairman of MDC said in his speech that he was pleased that the New Media Grassroots was bringing attention to the outstanding work of Malaysian students and was meeting the increasing demand for creative multimedia talents in Malaysia. He continued to say that the supply of strong knowledge workers in this field would ensure that the creative multimedia initiatives continue to grow and provide impetus for the further development of the Multimedia Super Corridor.

Dr Shafiq Abdullah, chairman of ANB said during the preview that he was happy with the outcome of the New Media Grassroots project and hoped that this project would draw interest from Malaysians to take up a career in this area as it would mean that Malaysia would be seen by the world of animation as a source of skilled workers and creative talents.

"We are capable of creating our own multimedia movies which are as good as 'Shrek' or 'Toy Story' if not better. With programmes like these, we hope to enlighten the Malaysian public that Malaysians can produce such with our current resources," he commented during his speech at the preview.

The audience at the preview was shown 'Wannabe' and 'The Crossing', two pieces of creative works from students of MMU, which marked the success of the New Media Grassroots programmes as both efforts were amazingly professional and original in context.

A total of 9 episodes will hit the public access channels, all showing the hard work and effort contributed by the students and lecturers who went around putting together their animation movies. The public can expect to view the episodes on NTV7, ASTRO, RTM, TV3 and MITV. ●