

CSR is more than philanthropy

Zarinah: Translate ideas into business strategies

By **SUSAN TAM**
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KUALA LUMPUR: Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives are not only about philanthropy but translating these ideas into practical business strategies.

Securities Commission chairman Datuk Zarinah Anwar said Malaysian firms were at different levels of development and achievement in implementing CSR-driven efforts.

"It is not about donating money, but more importantly it is about integrating social and ethical practices into business strategies," she told reporters after delivering the keynote address at the UNDP/ICR Malaysia CSR Conference yesterday. She said Khazanah Nasional Bhd's Silver Book programme was an example that firms could adopt in their own business practices.

To a question, she said Malaysia's Islamic funds had a lot in common with socially responsible funds, which were an important aspect in promoting CSR among investors.

Earlier in her speech, she said over the last few years, there had been a growing inclination towards ethically or socially responsible invest-



Datuk Zarinah Anwar

ments.

"In Australia, managed socially responsible investment portfolios grew by 56% during the 2006 financial year.

"In Europe, there are 388 green, social and ethical funds as at June 30, 2006 compared with 280 funds in 2001," she said.

She said the availability of social and environmental reporting indices such as the Dow Jones Sustainability Index or ACCA's Malaysian Environmental and Social Reporting Awards allowed investors to focus

their investment strategies on benefits of socially and environmentally responsible investing.

Later, at a press conference, Institute of Corporate Responsibility Malaysia (ICRM) secretary Tay Kay Luan said CSR awareness among local firms had increased over the year, but at different levels.

"Some companies have a very elementary understanding of corporate governance and ethical standards," he said.

Tay said ICRM would play a role in influencing and educating the business community with the best practices and international standards to integrate CSR ideas into their businesses.

MAS Capital Pvt Ltd corporate branding and strategic CR director Ravi Fernando said Malaysia was poised to lead the way for firms to set CSR as an integral part of their businesses.

He said Malaysia was "doing better than other countries" in the region by initiating CSR reporting amongst firms and with regulatory bodies such as Bursa Malaysia setting up CSR framework and the launch of the Silver Book programme.

Ericsson launches two CSR programmes

KUALA LUMPUR: Ericsson Malaysia has launched two programmes to reaffirm its commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives by providing technological access to the underprivileged and creating new applications to benefit the community.

President and country manager Krishna Kumar said the programmes, which were the initial projects for 2007/8, could be expanded depending on their developments.

"We will definitely look at other projects and areas. We are keen to support areas such as e-health and e-government by providing the relevant applications," he told reporters after the launch of Ericsson's new CSR logo and tagline "Shaping A Better Tomorrow" yesterday.

The first programme involves collaboration with Yayasan Salam and Maxis Communications Bhd to set up a computer and broadband activity room in Rumah Nur Salam, a shelter for underprivileged children from the Chow Kit area.

This project was aimed at helping the children enhance their information and communications technology skills and explore their potential, he said.

Krishna said the second programme was to organise the Ericsson KACIP Award in co-operation with Multimedia Development Corp Sdn Bhd, which would encourage the development of local applications in Malaysia.

DIS Technology plans digital audio park

By **DAVID TAN**
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PENANG: DIS Technology Holdings Bhd is proposing to establish a digital audio broadcasting (DAB) park in the Kulim Hi-Tech Park (KHTP).

Managing director Dustin Cheah said it had submitted the proposal to Kulim Technology Park Corp (KTPC), the managing body of KHTP, and expected to receive a reply soon.

"If approved, we will start the project in the fourth quarter. This would be the first DAB park in the country," he told *StarBiz*.

Cheah said the funds to set up the park would be internally generated.

"Once (the park is) completed, KHTP will pay us a fee," he said.

Cheah said the DAB park would promote the use of the DAB technology in the country.

"It will allow the KHTP management to transmit digital and audio data to the KHTP business community," he said.

According to him, DAB differs from conventional analogue radio transmission in that it can deliver high quality text and audio data simultaneously.

"Conventional analogue radio transmission only allows the delivery of limited audio data," he said.

At present, DIS Technology designs and develops DAB radios for the European market.

"The group sells about 10,000 DAB radios in Europe per month. Each unit is priced between US\$50 and US\$60 in the retail market," Cheah said.



Dustin Cheah with a DAB radio manufactured by DIS Technology

Cheah said the group was now in talks with a few radio broadcast stations in France, Italy and Australia to supply them with DAB receivers and equipment.

Headquartered in Bayan Lepas Industrial Estate, DIS Technology specialises in designing consumer electronic products.

"About 60% of our products are sold in the US and Europe while the remaining are sold locally.

"We expect our DAB radios to make up a substantial percentage of our revenue for the third and fourth quarters of this year," Cheah added.

CORPORATE SNAPSHOTS

THE Affin banking group, in a firmer position now following a major revamp, recently held its customer appreciation night. Featuring a jazz band, the event was held at the grand ballroom of a prominent hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

About 600 guests including industry captains turned up. Affin Bank became the first bank to reduce the interest charge on all its credit cards from the current 18% to 9.99%, effective Aug 31.



Seated from left: Affin Investment Bank chairman Tan Sri Yaacob Mohd Zain, Affin Investment Bank managing director Maimoonah Hussain, Boustead Holdings Bhd group managing director Tan Sri Lodin Wok Kamaruddin, Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Dr Awang Adek Hussin and Affin Bank chairman Jen (R) Tan Sri Ismail Omar. Standing is Affin Islamic Bank CEO Kamarul Ariffin Jamil.



Seated from left: Retired Federal Court judge/judge, International Criminal Tribunal Tan Sri Mohd Azmi Datuk Kamaruddin, Rahim & Co executive chairman Datuk Abdul Rahim Rahman and Real Estate Housing Developers Association president Ng Seing Liong. Standing from left: Urban Hallmark Properties managing director Datuk Jeffry Ng, Public Bank managing director Datuk Seri Tay Ah Lek and LBS Bina group managing director Datuk Lim Hock San.



From left: Financial Mediation Bureau director Ong Chong Hye, Association of Banks in Malaysia executive director Wong Suan Lye and Affin Bank director Datuk Razman Hashim.



From left: SKA Management Consultants Sdn Bhd chairman Datuk N. Sadavisan, Affin Bank managing director/CEO Datuk Seri Abdul Hamidy Abdul Hafiz and Felda Holdings Bhd group managing director of Datuk Mohd Bakke Salleh.

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