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+SMART CARD+ TO FACILITATE SPEEDY IMMIGRATION PROCESS

Mahathir-Card

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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the government will introduce the use of the +Smart Card+ as soon as possible to facilitate speedy immigration process for people entering and leaving the country, often for specific purposes.

The card was not only for Malaysians but, also foreign nationals who visit the country often for business and other purposes, he added.

Holders of the card could enter the country without, having their passports checked and they need only insert the card into a special machine which would register their entry or departure.

However, the card would not be issued to everybody as the system was a privilege, he told reporters after presenting the 1991 Prime Minister's Quality Award at the Putra World Trade Centre here today.

+Priority will be given to people entering the country often for specific purposes and the government would decide the type of people to be given the Smart Card, he said. -- more

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Mahathir-Card 2 Kuala Lumpur

He added that efforts would be made to ensure that the system would not jeopardise the country's security.

The card would not replace the functions of the passport and, if necessary, holders of the card would be asked to show their passports to the Immigration officer on duty.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said he directed a study to be 'carried out on the use of the Smart Card two months ago.

The Immigration Department was now studying the type of card to be used and whether the holder would still have to fill in the disembarkation form before entering the country.

The department needed to have special machines and separate lanes at entry points for the purpose, he added.

The Prime Minister said the cost of issuing the card would be borne by the **holders**.

Replying to a question, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said he was not sure whether the card had been used by any country in the region. -- more

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Mahathir-Card 3 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Last, October, Johor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin suggested that the Federal government discuss with the Singapore government on the possibility of introducing the Smart Card for Malaysians working in Singapore and vice versa, similar to the one used by Indonesian workers entering Singapore.

Speaking about the award, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said he found that most sectors in the country were giving emphasis to quality and making efforts to step up **the** quality of work.

+This is a good sign for the future of this country,+ he said.

He also said the government had formulated proper procedures for disciplinary action against errant staff.

The move was taken after the government found that those in the disciplinary board were reluctant to act against the offenders for fear that their action might be challenged in court.

The winners of the award this year are the Malaysian Rubber Research Institute (public sector), Syarikat Motorola Malaysia Sdn. Bhd (private sector) and Malaysian Red Crescent (social sector). -- Bernama

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