

'Smart Card' system for frequent travellers

By K.H. Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Malaysia will introduce a "smart card" system soon for the convenience of frequent travellers at immigration checkpoints, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Immigration Department was now studying the different types of "smart cards" to be used, he said.

"I gave out instructions to the department two months ago to study the use of these cards and they will be introduced as soon as possible,"

said the Prime Minister.

"Smart cards" are plastic cards with encoded data, usually in the form of magnetic strips. In this case, for immigration clearance, the cards would contain personal particulars, passport numbers and dates of last entry or exit.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Home Minister, said the cards would be available only to specific groups of travellers, both Malaysians and foreigners.

He said the department was now studying the security and procedural aspects

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"The smart card will not replace the passport. It is only a privilege and they have to pay for it," he said.

He was speaking to reporters after presenting the annual Prime Minister's Quality Awards at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

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

On the awards Dr Mahathir said since "its intro-

duction last year, he noticed that most departments and private companies had placed quality as their top priority.

He said there had also been many changes in the civil service and the Chief Secretary to the Government had commissioned studies on various aspects of work procedures.

On red tape, he said it was evident now that much of it had been reduced and forms either consolidated or simplified.

Speaking at the awards ceremony, Youth and

Sports Minister Senator Haji Annuar Musa called on all Malaysians to inculcate positive values like trust, discipline, honesty and responsibility.

He said such qualities would be part of efforts to cultivate a work culture of excellence and quality.

Senator Haii Annuar, the chairman of the supreme council for the Excellent Work Culture Movement, said the judging for next year's awards in the private sector category would emphasise small and medium size companies.