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(P) Mahathir - National Communication Policy

LEAD Mahathir-telecommunications

M'SIA MUST HAVE TECHNOLOGY FOR PLACE IN GLOBAL VILLAGE

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KUALA LUMPUR, May 17 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has to participate widely in the satellite telecommunications industry to derive benefit from the concept of the global village of a borderless telecommunication network, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The failure of Malaysian companies to participate in the industry would result in giant corporations of developed countries monopolising the industry, he said.

Such monopoly would not only deprive Malaysia of revenue and income but also bring with it a flood of information and entertainment adverse to local culture, he said.

In this connection, Dr Mahathir said Malaysian companies should invest and engage in the process of formulating the global village concept and together acquire technology and gain entry into the international market.

Launching the National Telecommunications Policy (DTN) in conjunction with World Telecommunications Day here, he said: "If we are not careful and unprepared to participate, the industry will become the monopoly of a few only."

He said the concept of the global village portrayed a world where the telecommunication network via satellite and cable is able to convey sound, data and images quickly and efficiently without heed for geographical boundaries. -- more

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The great changes in the telecommunications industry had resulted in various problems regarding how to manage the change and all these had to be handled carefully "if we are to develop an industry that benefits the consumers."

Dr Mahathir said the regulatory framework of the country's telecommunications was still incomplete. He wanted issues relating to licencing be reviewed to make it more effective.

He said at present the issue of licence was based on technology and not on services.

In the future, priority would be given to service aspects than technology and the regulatory body should be sensitive to latest innovation.

Dr Mahathir said through such approach the regulatory body would always be two steps ahead of the private sector in the development of telecommunications.--more

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Dr Mahathir said in the race for economic progress, the basic needs of the rural people should not be overlooked although telecommunication services in the town generated more profits.

He said appropriate social responsibility should be given towards raising the standard of telecommunication services in the rural areas.

This was in line with the government objective of exposing the people to progress in the telecommunications field.

Earlier, Energy, Telecommunications and Post Minister Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu said without a modern telecommunications network it would be difficult for Malaysia to achieve the status of industrialised nation.

He said the telecommunications sector played an important role not only in linking the economic sector with the other sectors but also in linking Malaysia with outside world.

It could not be denied that Malaysia needed a modern telecommunications network to retain its competitive edge, he said, saying that the sector was very important in enhancing the country's economic growth.--more

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The National Telecommunications Policy (DTN) outlines the objectives of the telecommunications industry as a prime mover of the nation's development.

The policy, valid until 2020, will ensure that Malaysia progresses well in the field of telecommunications to support its vision to achieve the status of industrialised nation by the year 2020.--Bernama

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