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Multimedia-Society

PUBLIC TOLD TO KEEP ABREAST WITH INFORMATION AGE

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 2 (Bernama) -- The society should keep abreast with the latest information technology in order not to lag behind in the current global information revolution, according to panellists at the Multimedia Asia '96 discussion today.

In the discussion on Socio-Cultural Dimensions of the Global Multimedia Community, they agreed that "multimedia phobic" people will eventually be left behind by the rapid development in the Information Technology era.

Panel member Thomas Bohn, who is assistant to chairman for Japan Times, said the emergence of multimedia phobia in the society is reminiscent of the rebellion against the early 1900s industrial revolution in England.

He said those who avoid new technology or are against it are bound to fail.

These people should realise the importance of learning the technology because it will make things a lot easier, Bohn said.

Although it is difficult to grasp, ultimately people will realise that they could not run away from it, he said.

Illustrating the reluctance of some people to learn new technologies, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (Istis) director-general Datuk Dr Noordin Sopiee related an experience he encountered 12 years ago when he directed all his employees to be computer literate.

"I was so surprised that two of them resigned as a result," said Noordin, who chaired the session.

Noordin also said serious socio-political problems could arise with the increasing gap between "Netizens" (people linked to the internet) and the "Non-netizens".

He appeared to be sceptical that the gap could be bridged within a short period.

"There are countries which have yet to manufacture their own match sticks or pencils," he said, adding that people in these nations will find it difficult to catch up with the information revolution.

The Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) Exposition and Conference, opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday, is to promote the RM5 billion MSC project that will enable Malaysia to make a quantum leap into the future.

The MSC, a 15km by 50km area encompassing the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC), Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) in Sepang, the new federal administrative capital of Putrajaya and the newly proposed IT City, is aimed to be a hub for multimedia infrastructure and development. --

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