

27 FEB 1997

CALL FOR NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN ON COMPUTER LITERACY

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 27 (Bernama) -- Opposition leader and DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang said today that Malaysia should launch a nationwide campaign on computer literacy to place the nation among the world's top 10 nations in computer literacy by the year 2005.

He said this will be in keeping with the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) initiative which calls for computer literacy not only in the workplace but also in homes and among the general population.

He was commenting on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who expressed dissatisfaction over the level of computer use in Malaysia although compared to other developing countries, Malaysia is considered "advanced".

"If Malaysia is serious in wanting to make the quantum leap into the Digital Era and achieve the aim of making Malaysia as an international Information Technology (IT) hub through the MSC, then it is not adequate for Malaysia to be "advanced" as compared to other developing countries in computer literacy, but we must attain the level comparable to the developed countries as well," he said in a statement issued here.

Lim said in a survey on "Computers per Capita" for 1995, the Global Competitiveness Report ranked Malaysia in the 26th place, with the United States, Australia, Canada, Norway, Finland, New Zealand, Denmark, Netherlands, Britain, Ireland and Singapore occupying the first 10 positions.

Lim said the "technophobia" among Malaysians especially those above 40 must be conquered and there was an urgent need for a nationwide campaign to educate the people that information technology (IT) and computers are nothing to be afraid of and that IT brings benefits not just for the few but for all in improving the quality of life of people at home, in learning and at work. -- BERNAMA

HS RM