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Creating a civil society via National IT Agenda

THE imagination of Malaysians in information technology (IT) is to be fuelled by the theme "Turning Ripples Into Tidal Waves" under the National IT Agenda.

The agenda, unveiled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in December last year, recently received Cabinet approval to be adopted as a strategy for national development and nation building and for the creation of a civil society.

It was to address two issues: the options for Malaysia if the present economic structure cannot carry the country towards its vision of industrialisation and what can be done about the importance of IT.

The agenda will use water metaphors such as "recognising the sea change", "initiating the ripples", "generating resonant waves", and "growing webs locally, making waves globally", in its subheadings to describe the strategic intent of the agenda.

"Its still in the ripple stage," said Dr Mahathir, after chairing the National IT Council (NITC) meeting in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

The need to balance three critical and closely inter-related elements - people, infostructure and applications are stressed in the agenda.

To plan, initiate and evaluate the three elements, the NITC has formed three Development Programme Task Forces, which will ensure the different strategies and programmes are integrated.

A unique feature of the agenda is the development of the Knowledge Imperative Index and the Multicultural Index, to monitor and evaluate the performance of the agenda itself and the progress of Malaysian society towards a civil one.

The NITC has also identified three key initiatives to drive the agenda, and these are the IT Programmes, the Multimedia Super Corridor and its flagship applications, and the Demonstrator Applications.

With the premise of "IT is for all, and all is for IT", the success of the agenda, according to the NITC, depends on the active involvement, cooperation and collaboration of the public sector agencies, the private sector organisations and the non-profit and non-governmental organisations.

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