

13/10/1997

DAP supports move to promote IT

MALACCA, Sun. - The DAP today supported Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's call to the country to promote Information Technology awareness.

Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang said the DAP fully endorsed the Government's initiative and added that the party had been in the forefront by promoting the "IT For All" campaign.

"The success of Vision 2020 depends on our ability to transform the country into an information-based society," said the DAP secretary-general when opening the party's 10th State convention at a hotel here.

Also present were State DAP chairman and Bandar Hilir Assemblyman Sim Tong Him, State party secretary and Kota Melaka MP Lim Guan Eng and State Assemblymen for Durian Daun and Tengkeru Yew Kok Kee and Goh Leong San respectively.

Last night, Dr Mahathir called the people to prepare for the challenges of the information revolution and to rally behind the Government's efforts to develop Information Technology.

In his address to the nation, the Prime Minister said: "Today as I launch the National IT Awareness Campaign, I would like to ask Malaysians, young and old, rural and urban, Government and the Opposition alike, to answer this 'call to arms' and support the nation's initiative in harnessing IT."

Lim urged the Government to make IT a subject understood by all Malaysians.

Lim outlined four steps that the Government could take to achieve this aim.

"Firstly, the Government should aim for more Malaysians to log-on to the Internet as the present number of 160,000 subscribers is still very low," he said, adding that the Government should aim for 500,000 subscribers by the end of 1998.

Increasing the number of Internet Service Providers, he said, was one way to achieve this objective.

The second step, he said, was to reduce the charges for logging-on to the Internet and to revert to the old rate which was based on the number of times the subscribers log-on.

"The Government should also promote IT among the 250,000 teachers in the country so that they can influence their students to become more aware of IT," he said.

He said as an added incentive, the Government could offer interest-free loans for teachers to buy personal computers.

The fourth step was to change the mind-set of the nation and to allow for free-flow of information so that the Government would be more accountable and transparent.

"The Government should form a committee comprising government officials, the opposition and civic organisations to oversee IT-related issues," he added.

(END)