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DAP to raise IT awareness

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The DAP will hold a nationwide campaign to raise greater IT-consciousness and computer literacy among the people, its secretary-general Lim Kit Siang said today.

He said towards this end, an intensive nationwide educational campaign to promote IT consciousness, literacy and fluency among Malaysians was also urgently needed.

Lim said for the success of the Multimedia Super Corridor, there should be a National IT Agenda and Plan which gives top priority to the transformation of Malaysians into a computer literate and computer fluent population.

"We have to do this to create the pre-conditions where the MSC can be a huge test-bed for trying out not just the technology but also the way of life in the age of instant and unlimited information," said Lim, who is also Tanjong MP and Opposition leader in Parliament.

He said this at the launching of a book authored by him entitled IT for All.

The book was launched by Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Zahir Ismail.

Also present were Dewan Negara president Tan Sri Mohamed Yaakob and DAP party leaders.

The 163-page book, which among others includes speeches made by Lim in Parliament and media reports, was published by the DAP. It is priced at RM15.

Asked when the DAP would start the campaign, Lim said the party's IT committee would decide on it soon.

"I support the MSC concept as a huge test bed to try out the new technology and culture of the digital era but this brave idea can only succeed if it involves the full participation of all Malaysians in the transition to the information age," he said.

Lim said at present very few Malaysians knew what the MSC had to offer and many were under the fallacy that IT was MSC and vice versa.

"A sizeable segment of our informed elite must also be as computer literate, creative and as innovative as their counterparts in the most advanced countries," he said.

Lim added that to realise this, all the 1,273 schools now without or with limited electricity supply should be provided with power and connected to the Information Superhighway by 2000.

On his book, Lim said it was a small contribution towards raising greater IT-consciousness and awareness among Malaysians which was a prerequisite to the success of the national plan to make the quantum leap into the digital era.

Earlier, when launching the book, Zahir said IT would be a pervasive element in every dimension of human life, be it education, health, economic development or the spiritual realm.

He said in the course of parliamentary proceedings, Lim had been a vigorous advocate of IT and the need to make it accesible to all.

"One political analyst even remarked with some cynicism that it looks as if Lim is the strongest supporter of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the area of IT," he said.

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