

19/12/1997

Homepages for all govt agencies

ALL government agencies must establish their respective homepages on the Internet by the year 2000.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he hopes these agencies will give due attention to this directive.

"One of the important elements that can act as catalysts for the implementation of electronic government in the country is the use of Internet technology," he said at the Prime Minister Quality Award ceremony and opening of the National Electronic Government Symposium in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Expressing his satisfaction over the growing number of government agencies using Internet technology, Dr Mahathir said Internet offers numerous benefits.

He added that the Government's official information system or civil service link (CSL) has even been altered so that it can function in the Internet environment.

This alteration yielded a new system called the CSL Gateway, which is the transmission of primary government information via the Internet.

Dr Mahathir said since the success of CSL Gateway hinges on the establishment of homepages for Government agencies, a decision has been made requiring the agencies to have homepages before the year 2000.

The Prime Minister said the implementation of electronic government is very important for Malaysia in gearing itself to enter a new world and face the challenges of the fast-paced IT and multimedia era.

He added the Government has allocated RM400 million under the Budget 1998 for the development of technology and implementation of the electronic government.

IT developments at government agencies began a long time ago and the allocation for this purpose had grown from year to year.

In 1987, the Government spent RM47.7 million to computerise agencies, but currently it spends RM429.9 million on this.

Dr Mahathir said while much has been spent on IT development, the Government is still not satisfied.

He added that the electronic government concept extends further than mere use of computers at government offices and agencies.

"The vision is higher - encompassing a more meaningful relationship concept among Government officers, between the Government and the rakyat and the business community."

Dr Mahathir said a lot needs to be done before the vision of an electronic government can be realised.

He added that present rules, the system and working procedures need to be restructured to take advantage of multimedia applications' potential and benefits.

Bernama reports: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will open a Roundtable on "Electronic Communities in Asia" on February 12 and 13 in Kuala Lumpur, a spokeswoman of the organisers said yesterday.

Datuk Paddy Bowie, speaking on behalf of the co-organiser Economist Conferences, said the Roundtable would focus on the rapid developments in the regional information technology industry.

The Roundtable, also organised by the Multimedia Development Corp, will coincide with the second meeting of the International Advisory Panel (IAP) of the Multimedia Super Corridor.

Dr Mahathir is also the IAP chairman.

"It will examine many issues of importance to the Malaysian as well as the regional economy - such as the growth projections for electronic commerce and the private sector investment opportunities," she said.

(END)