

26 MAR 1997

Parliament-debate

IMPACT STUDY ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS NEEDED

KUALA LUMPUR, 26 Mac (Bernama) -- The government was today asked to carry out an impact study on awareness of the importance of information technology to civil servants and political leaders in realising the objectives of Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

Ruhanie Ahmad (BN-Parit Sulong) said he had observed that there were political leaders and government employees who seemed to have an indifferent attitude regarding the MSC although some appreciated Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's objectives.

He said the impact study was important in ensuring that leaders really understood and were committed to ensure the success of the information technology industry.

However, in its eagerness to create the manpower in the information industry the government must not neglect to provide the labour force in the other fields, he said when debating the royal address at the Dewan Rakyat today.

He said the government should also suggest to the local financial institutions to be more responsive to the needs of bumiputera entrepreneurs in securing credit facilities and capital to venture into the MSC-related businesses.

Ruhanie also called on Singapore Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, his son, Lee Hsieng Loong and Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong to tender a public apology to the people, government and Sultan of Johor with regard to the former Singapore Prime Minister's statement that shooting, robbery and car-jackings were common in Johor.

He said the apology tendered by the senior Lee alone was not sufficient as his son, Hsien Loong is a young leader with the potential to lead Singapore.

Ruhanie, who appeared to be close to tears, said: "We are prepared to put aside historical sentiment that Singapore was opened and owned by the Malays and all the sacrifices were made by the Malays in the interest of co-existence."

He said Lee's derogatory remarks could not be forgotten by everyone in the country and would hurt the feelings of Malaysians forever.

Meanwhile, Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Tanjong) expressed the DAP's willingness to cooperate with the government in tackling social issues which he felt should be approached on an integrated basis by all parties.

He said that the social problems, if not addressed immediately, would hinder efforts in achieving national objectives to become a developed nation through "Vision 2020".

He also urged the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) to furnish the report on developments pertaining to the investigation on Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Haji Muhammad Taib who was detained at the Brisbane airport in Australia in December last year for failing to declare money totalling RM2.4 million that he was carrying.

He said although the ACA was investigating the matter, it was important that the agency reported on the developments in the investigation.

As an example, he said the ACA should state the number of witnesses that had been called up or whether Muhammad himself had given his explanation on the matter, and claimed that the ACA had actually not carried out any investigation following orders from the Umno Supreme Council.

The meeting continues tomorrow. -- BERNAMA
RHM AO