

19 AUG 1997

MSC-Mahathir

PM WILL ADDRESS NATION ON MSC NEXT MONTH

SHAH ALAM, Aug 19 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will explain the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) concept to the people over all television and radio channels in the middle of next month.

Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat said today the prime minister's keynote address was part of the government's effort to counter the campaigns of certain parties, both within and outside the country, to confuse the people by spreading news that the MSC would fail and was only a pipe-dream.

"We feel that the prime minister, as the founder and motivator of the MSC, needs to explain to the people what he means by the MSC because we see that there are still people who do not understand the MSC and worldwide campaigns to weaken the country's agenda," he said.

He told reporters this after launching the Information Technology Week organised by Institut Teknologi Mara's (ITM) Information Technology and Quantitative Science Faculty, here.

The event with the theme, "IT: Approaching New Millennium" is aimed at exposing ITM students and opening their minds to the importance of IT.

Mohamad sought the cooperation of all private television and radio stations to allocate prime time for the prime minister to address the nation simultaneously through the government and private networks.

Mohamed said it was up to Dr Mahathir to fix the date for the address.

He said the campaign to promote the MSC was a continuous government effort through the electronic and print media through programmes on face-to-face meetings.

The involvement of all parties in the MSC campaign was important to realise the government's agenda to develop information technology (IT).

Mohamed said the government believed that IT through the setting up of the MSC, which focussed on multimedia technology, was the best way to prepare the economic structure to make it more progressive and competitive in the world market.

He did not see why the MSC project could not be successfully implemented when Malaysians were now mature and understood and accepted the government's programmes which had proven its ability to develop the nation for 40 years since independence.

"With the experience and strong spirit of Malaysians, the MSC will become a reality," he said, adding that an IT-based economy was a new millennium economy and Malaysians could not run away from participating in IT activities.

Mohamed also said that the Information Ministry and Department would not entertain any correspondence in English except from foreigners who did not understand Bahasa Malaysia.

He said this was because there was a tendency among the public to use English when dealing with government departments.

"There is this trend now that because we say that the English language is just as important, people deal with the government in English...I feel that this does not symbolise the spirit of love for Malaysia," he said at the launch.

He said that although the people were encouraged to master English, they should respect Bahasa Malaysia as an important national symbol. --

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