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Kit Siang-IT

REVERT TO PREVIOUS TELEPHONE CHARGE SYSTEM FOR INTERNET USERS

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 12 (Bernama) -- Telekom Malaysia should revert to the previous telephone charge system and abolish the time-based charges as one way to make the National IT Awareness Campaign effective, Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang said today.

He said the 160,000 Internet subscribers in Malaysia was a far cry from Mimos Bhd's estimate of 500,000 subscribers by the year-end.

" The main reason why there is a sharp drop in the Internet take-up rate in Malaysia, which in April last year grew at a rate of 22 per cent a month, is the prohibitive telephone charges especially when Telekom introduced the time-based charge system in June last year," he said in a statement outlining six proposals to make the National IT Awareness Campaign effective.

He said there should be a high-powered National IT Awareness Campaign committee with representatives from political parties, civic organisations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations to be responsible for drawing up and implementing an IT action plan.

Lim said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad should declare the national target of reaching 500,000 Internet subscribers by end of next year.

Lim said the government should take on teachers as target groups and draw up a two-year programme to ensure that by the year 2000, 250,000 teachers would become computer-literate and be linked to the Internet.

He said a vast majority of the 250,000 teachers in the country were computer-illiterate.

He also proposed that the government give interest-free loans to teachers to buy personal computers. -- BERNAMA

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