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TELECOMMUNICATION-EQUAL ACCESS

TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE PROVIDERS AGREE TO PUBLICISE EQUAL ACCESS

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 17 (Bernama) -- Telecommunication service providers have agreed to contribute towards public awareness programme on the benefit of equal access, said Director General of Telecommunications Department, Malaysia Datuk Hod Parman.

A task force group is preparing various modes of information dissemination programmes to create this public awareness, which is expected to take off in October, he said after launching the Asean Telecom 98 website in conjunction with the exhibition and conference to be held on Nov 3-6.

Hod also urged the five telecommunication service providers to publicise and educate, as soon as possible, both corporate and home users on the benefit of equal access which will be implemented on Jan 1, 1999.

The equal access players involved are Telekom Malaysia Bhd, Bina-Sat Com Sdn Bhd, Time Telecommunications Sdn Bhd, Mutiara Telecommunications Sdn Bhd and Celcom Sdn Bhd.

Hod said the information could be provided via the internet, media and exhibitions.

He also called on service providers to take part in the Asean Telekom 98 exhibition and conference, pointing out that "the key service providers should take this opportunity to project their unity and preparedness to give quality and competitive services."

On the equal access trial, Hod said, all the players were taking part and are working on the ground condition of the system to ensure that the service would be ready on Jan 1.

Minister of Energy, Telecommunications and Posts Datuk Leo Moggie launched the equal access service trial on July 15. The trial programme would be on until December.

Hod said equal access is one of the steps taken by the government to ensure that consumer and service providers benefitted from the advancement of technologies.

"The telecommunication industry is receiving great attention from both the public and private sectors because we recognise it as the nation's back-bone for economic and social development," he said.

On rumours spread via internet, he said at this stage the department has yet to focus on the matter, but if new laws were set up and enforced on such matter, the department would be able to study details concerning this matter.

Meanwhile, Tan Sri Dr Ahmad Mustaffa Babjee, the executive chairman of AMB Exhibitions Sdn Bhd, the organiser of Asean Telecom 98, said a total of 220 exhibitors from 18 countries are expected to take part in the exhibition with some 10,000 trade visitors anticipated to visit the exhibition which would be opened by prime minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

About 20 percent of the exhibitors have confirmed their participation so far, he said, adding that he was confident that the targetted 220 exhibitors could be met.

Among the big names that have agreed to participate are three giant German companies namely Siemens, Bosch Telecom and Krone. Others are Telekom Malaysia, Nokia, NEC, Cisco System, Iridium, Sagem and Marconi.

Ahmad Mustaffa said AMB Exhibitions will spend about RM1.5 million to stage Asean Telecom 98 and of this amount, RM500,000 will be used to

promote the event internationally.

On efforts to lure the visitors, he said part of the RM500,000 would be used to sponsor the visit of director generals of telecommunications of Asean countries and that it is hoped they in turn would bring along key telecom captains to visit the event. -- BERNAMA

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