

# KL proposes network to counter cyber crime, misinformation

By IZATUN SHARI

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia has proposed an Asean Network Security Co-ordinating Centre to counter the rising incidents of cyber crime and misinformation through the Internet in the region.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it was imperative that adequate measures be taken to formulate a comprehensive and foolproof regulatory and legislative framework, partic-

ularly for the conduct of e-commerce activities.

"The misuse of the Internet for propagating and disseminating information detrimental to both national and societal interests are on the rise," he pointed out at the opening of the Asean Telecommunications Ministers Meeting (Telmin) here yesterday.

"The number of websites dedicated to hate and pornography is mushrooming and becoming more easily accessible, especially to the

younger generation," he said in his speech, read out by Energy, Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Amar Leo Moggie.

Dr Mahathir said there were people trying everything possible to disrupt and thwart efforts by governments and related institutions to push the knowledge-economy plans forward.

"These people include international criminal syndicates, amateur hackers, virus pranksters and e-money con men who cause cata-

strophic effect on the information infrastructure that form the basis and foundation of a k-based society," he said.

He said it was vital for Asean to determine its own agenda while moving towards k-economy as Asean could no longer be dictated by the richer world in this new field characterised by the digital revolution.

The Prime Minister said that instead of following developmental models perpetuated by industria-

lised nations, Asean should play the game according to its own rules.

"The rules of these models only ensure that we remain subservient to the dictates of the richer world," he added.

Dr Mahathir, who said that ensuring a well co-ordinated network security system was needed in making an Asean k-economy a reality, also urged the ministers to

■ TURN TO PAGE FOUR ✓

STAR 14 JUL 2001

STAR 14 JUL 200

# Asean to set up regional Internet exchange

■ FROM PAGE ONE

give particular attention to the following:

- **NARROWING** the digital divide among Asean countries by ensuring that there was a more equitable distribution of communication and information infrastructure;

- **DEVELOPING** skills and expertise to promote and enhance the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT); and

- **DEVELOPING** local and regional content for the Asean region.

Asean secretary-general Rodolfo C. Severino said the grouping had endorsed the setting up of an Asean Regional Internet Exchange (Arix) to keep costs down and improve the quality of ICT service in the region.

"Keeping costs down and having a high quality of service are even more important today when the Internet and other users of ICT are so dependent on telecommunication facilities," he said at the meeting.

He said one of the reasons for the high casualty rate among Internet Service Providers (ISPs) was the steep rates of telephone services and in Asean as much as 70% of intra-Asean traffic had to be routed through certain developed countries far away where such distances entailed higher costs.

On another issue, Severino said member countries must enact laws to govern ICT and make sure that they were regionally harmonised.

So far, only four Asean countries have laws covering electronic commerce while one another has a Bill still to be enacted.

"Other Asean members are working on their own legislation," Severino said.