

# Women urged to embrace IT to avoid being left behind

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IT is not just a trend but a revolution, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reminds Malaysians, particularly women

By EIRMALASAREBANI

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysians, particularly women, should focus on embracing information technology (IT) for use in their daily lives or risk being left behind.

He said if women do not start focusing on IT, they will be left out of various developments not only in the country but also internationally.

Dr Mahathir said IT is not just a "trend" but a huge revolution which can influence communication, education, trade, cooperation and relations among governments, community trade and scientific development, among others.

"Women make up about half of the country's population and 40 per cent of the workforce. Therefore, they must develop an interest in learning IT," he said when officiating at the Women Institute of Management (WIM)'s new building, Wisma WIM, in

Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

WIM is a non-profit organisation which runs development programmes for women, particularly those living in the rural areas, in-

cluding single mothers and Orang Asli women.

Members of the WIM business network will benefit from, among others, discounts on courses, reduced rental

rates for hire of seminar rooms, a multi-purpose hall and an exhibition area in Wisma WIM.

Wisma WIM, situated on a 0.6ha site, has an adminis-

tration block, nine seminar rooms, a multi-purpose hall, a residential block which can house 80 people, a women's hall of fame, two prayer rooms and 90 parking bays.

Among its tenants are Southern Bank Bhd, Consumer International Asia Pacific, Australian software company MYOB and in-house restaurant Little Chef.

Meanwhile, WIM chairman Datuk Napsiah Omar said its programmes are opened to all women. Since it was set up in December 1994, WIM has trained over 7,000 women.

Earlier, the Prime Minister launched WIM's charity electronic auction website.

Among the items being auctioned are Dr Mahathir's necktie and cufflink from Lapis Lazuli and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali's autographed handbag.

Dr Mahathir also autographed 49 copies of the limited edition of "Mahathir's Millennium Wish", which are available for a minimum donation of RM1,000 each.

The first copy will be placed in a time capsule to be opened in the year 2051.

Among the takers were Southern Bank, which took 10 copies of the Prime Minister's millennium wish.