

Mahathir laments poor IT literacy

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is unhappy that many Malaysians are still not making any effort to learn and use computers.

He said the Government had done "everything" for Malaysians to learn to use computers without having to wait until they can own one.

"I am not happy because too many people are just not making any effort.

"If we don't start now, when others are learning this new skill, we will be left behind," he told reporters after launching the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Literacy for k-economy assembly at Putra Stadium in Bukit Jalil yesterday.

About 1,000 people including workers, students and housewives took part in what was dubbed the largest computer tutorial event in the country organised by the Human Resources Ministry.

The record-breaking attempt was endorsed by *Malaysia Book of Records*.

Dr Mahathir dismissed suggestions that an imbalance existed in the country as, while the Government was encouraging the people and students to become computer literate, there were still students who were unable to pay their ex-

amination fees.

The Prime Minister said in cases like this, the poor students should have brought their problem to the attention of the proper authority so that arrangements could be made to help them.

It was reported recently that 650 students in Gua Musang, Kelantan, were facing difficulty in sitting for their examination as their parents were too poor to pay the fees.

In his opening address, the Prime Minister said Malaysians must adapt to the changing needs of the country so that they become trendsetters rather than copy what others have achieved.

He said to become trendsetters, Malaysians from all walks of life need to be computer literate so that they could fully use the services available to improve their competency.

"The knowledge you acquire today will benefit you in the long run.

"It will help you in your business, your daily lives, your communication with family members and friends and, most importantly, you can impart it to your children.

"I urge all Malaysians to make a wise decision by being computer literate today," he added.