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Dr Mahathir to name smart card at Sept 5 launch

PETALING JAYA, Wed. - Like Jalur Gemilang for our national flag, the new multi-application smart card that will replace the present identity card will also have a special name.

The name for the world's first multi-application smart card will be announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at its launch at Putra World Trade Centre on Sept 5.

Home Ministry secretary-general Datuk Aseh Che Mat said the credit card-sized smart card might look unassuming, with the basic information about the holder on the surface of the card.

However, its 32-kilobyte microprocessor chip holds a lot of information about the holder and has multi-application capabilities.

The information can only be retrieved using special card reader machines which will be issued to the police, Immigration Department, Road Transport Department and the Registration Department.

"This is an identity card but it can also be used as a passport when you leave and enter this country, a driving licence and an e-card. The number of applications can be increased," he said at a Press conference today to announce the official launch of the card at the National Registration Department.

However, while the smart card can be used in place of a passport when leaving or entering the country, Malaysians must have their passports to enter a foreign country.

He said the ceremony would be attended by more than 900 guests, including Ministers and Deputy Ministers, members of the International Advisory Panel for the Multimedia Super Corridor, ambassadors, senior civil servants, corporate figures and the MSC-status companies.

Since the soft launching last April, more than 35,000 smart cards were issued in Kuala Lumpur. At present, the card is only available to those staying in the MSC area.

For the rest of the country, the same card is issued although it only has one application - as an identity card. The card can be upgraded later to have multi-applications. To date, more than 400,000 cards have been issued in Peninsula Malaysia.

"We will issue the multi-application smart cards to Sabah from January and to the rest of the country from 2003. Its tamper-proof features will make it hard to be forged."

Earlier, he presented the prizes to the winners of a quiz on the smart card organised by the department.

The RM10,000 cash prize went to Seri Sazwani Zakaria while second and third-placed winners Mohd Hanafiah Mohd Said and Khairul Nizam Zainal Badri received RM5,000 and RM3,000 respectively. Four consolation prizes worth RM500 were also given out.

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