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Mahathir-IT

ADOPT ICT AS A WAY OF LIFE, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, May 3 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Malaysians should adopt information and communications technology (ICT) as a way of life not only to keep abreast of the information technology (IT) revolution but also to lead the way with the latest inventions.

He said that in facing challenges in the era of IT revolution, Malaysia would not experience a physical digital divide as there were already adequate facilities available but the country could be hindered by the mindset or "mind block" of the people especially the older generation who might not be receptive to new technology.

"This mind block is the greatest hurdle in our approach towards competence in this new era," he said when opening the seminar on "Handling The K-Economy Challenges: The Role Of The Younger Generation Towards The ICT Culture" here.

The one-day seminar, organised by Umno Youth, was attended by some 800 people including students of institutions of higher learning and young entrepreneurs.

Dr Mahathir said that the greatest resistance to efforts to develop a knowledge society was the older generation who would totally resist the application of new technology which includes accessing the internet for information.

The younger generation, he said, was quick in acquiring the latest technology which augured well for the nation in the era of IT revolution.

Dr Mahathir said that the new ICT revolution could boost knowledge among members of society to become more progressive and to enjoy a better quality of life.

He said that the Malays should not think that they were incapable of acquiring new technology or to be better than others.

They could in fact become inventors instead of just consumers in the new IT era, he said.

"There is no such thing as lack of brainpower among the Malays. The hurdle is their mind block and habit. We are just not interested in doing something like reading books or to work hard and tirelessly.

"Actually, what makes us backward is our habit which prevents us from mastering knowledge or acquiring efficiency," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the Malays should be prepared to change without needing to discard their Malay characteristics, and to be receptive to anything positive in order to contribute to national development.

The prime minister said that even though Malaysia was the most advanced developing country, the contribution of the Malays towards its development was still very much to be desired.

He said that he had tried to project a positive attitude through exemplary leadership like returning to work soon after an overseas trip even though exhausted, but many only just heap praises.

"Follow me, don't praise me," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the Malays should realise that not all the whites were modern, except for those in the West.

For instance, he said, Russia was not modern until Peter Alexevitch, better known as Peter the Great, made attempts to modernise his country by force, modelled after Europe.

They became successful that they could build the first satellite which

could travel into space with their own astronauts, he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the Malays should not face difficulty in learning as all they need was to be hard-working and be diligent in practising what they learn until they become efficient in the fields they embarked on.

In terms of mastering knowledge, he said that all they they need was to do a lot of revision instead of resorting to street demonstrations or become involved in political campaigns during the elections.

"(These actions) could not possibly make them clever and smart in their studies," he said.

He said that the Malays must also uphold the principle of continuous education even after graduation, to keep abreast of development in the various fields.

-- BERNAMA

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