

23/09/2002

MyKads and birth certs for newborns from Jan 1

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - All newborn children from Jan 1 next year will be issued with both birth certificates and MyKads upon registration with the National Registration Department (NRD).

NRD director-general Datuk Azizan Ayob said the department was finalising the details of implementation, believed to include provisions enabling the registration of a child's inoculation and schooling details.

On Friday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced in his Budget 2003 speech that in tandem with the Government's intention to widen the use of information and communications technology, all newborn children would be provided with MyKads, a lifelong identification document and a personal database.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, said this would reduce the hassle of filling up forms when dealing with government agencies and the private sector.

Asked to comment on Dr Mahathir's announcement that all Malaysians would possess MyKads by 2005, Azizan said between January last year and now, 2.3 million MyKads had been issued nationwide.

The department expects the number to grow to 3.3 million by the end of the year.

"I will hold meetings with heads of units to discuss how best the target of 2005 can be achieved. We will have to redeploy the existing staff to meet the rush," he said.

Dr Mahathir, in his Budget speech, said the NRD would be provided with sufficient staff and equipment as well as mobile units to meet the registration needs in rural areas.

Dr Mahathir said there was no reason for anyone not to convert their identity cards to MyKad by the end of 2005.

Azizan appealed to all IC holders to apply for their MyKads instead of waiting till the last minute to do so.

Malaysia is the first country to introduce MyKad, a multi-purpose smart card based on chip technology and biometrics with high security features.

MyKad contains information of the holder, including birth certificate details and information for dealing with government agencies. Additional applications such as ATM, MEPS cash and Touch n' Go will also be incorporated. The department is looking into several new applications to be incorporated into MyKad.

Starting next month, MyKad will be embedded with a 64kb chip, allowing holders access to a variety of services from banking to e-commerce and stock trading.

As for the Government's proposal to include more information such as marital status and voting constituency, Azizan said the department would have to study the proposal.