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MOGGIE-CELLULAR

MOGGIE TELLS CELLULAR SERVICE PROVIDERS TO PAY HEED TO PM'S CALL

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 11 (Bernama) -- Cellular phone service providers in the country should heed Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's call to them to broaden their service coverage, says energy, communication and multimedia minister Datuk Amar Leo Moggie.

It was also past their scheduled time to meet consumers' expectations in terms of widening coverage as mobile phones had now become a necessity, he said.

"We hope the prime minister's public comment on this will help push the companies to respond in a very quick way to meet the expectations of consumers," he told reporters after launching Percetakan Nasional Malaysia Bhd's portal ([www.printnasional.com.my](http://www.printnasional.com.my)) here today.

He was asked to comment on Dr Mahathir's statement yesterday, which among others, urged cellular phone service providers to improve their service coverage.

Moggie also said there should not be any problems for them to fulfill this need as the economic situation had improved.

"I guess in the past, in 1997 and 1998, some of these companies suffered financial worries. Now that it (financial crisis) is already over and we see improvement in the economic scene, the capex (capital expenditure) requirement they would need now is less than two years ago. So for that reason, we expect them to provide wider and better coverage," he said.

Moggie also reminded telcos that they should not look at the issue as a competitiveness matter because that was not the approach needed in Malaysia.

"They can compete in (terms of) quality of service, in rates but they should provide the coverage to everybody," he said.

He also called on cellular phone operators to step up on domestic roaming arrangements and share common towers to overcome the service coverage obstacles. -- BERNAMA

NM SHY