

Ensure more bumis in ICT

KUALA LUMPUR: Bumiputras should be given priority in new sectors such as biotechnology and information communications technology (ICT), to ensure they are not left behind, Umno Youth deputy chief Khairy Jamaluddin said.

"We don't want to see the workforce and technologists favouring only certain races in Malaysia and not reflecting the real composition of the population," he said.

"We need to move forward and make it our priority to facilitate the creation of more bumiputras in the ICT sector."

He added that ICT had been identified as an important component for development under the 9th Malaysia Plan.

Umno Youth, he said, hoped to see an increase in bumiputra-owned companies in the Multimedia Super Corridor as only 17% were now owned by the community.

He was speaking to reporters after Opening the MSC Malaysian business and ideas enhancement workshops organised by Umno Youth and the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC).

Khairy said the obstacles that bumiputra companies faced in penetrating the ICT market included shortage of professionals, access to capital and lack of knowledge in making business plans.

"The MDeC will facilitate in showing the technopreneurs how to build business plans and approach venture capitalists and investors," he said.

"The market is saturated and this makes it more difficult to penetrate.

"It requires creativity and innovation."

Khairy noted that while bumiputras were talented in producing animation series, they were often discouraged by the programming aspects.

"They must know that (programming) is what moves the animation and brings it to life," he said.

He said bumiputra IT graduates were also inclined to be skilled in human resource development rather than programming, which was the crux of the ICT industry.

Earlier, in his speech, Khairy touched on the national agenda and the revival of the spirit of the New Economic Policy that was raised by the movement at the last Umno general assembly.

"We do not want handouts but the opportunity to succeed on a much more level playing field," he said, adding that Umno Youth was happy that the Malay agenda was codified in the 9MP.

He said the Malay agenda was a struggle in the political and economic field.