

Cybercities must find own niche

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KULIM: Malaysia has built cybercities and cybercentres not for them to compete with each other but for them to find their own niche.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said these cybercities or Multimedia Super Corridors (MSCs) should focus on their respective specialisations, and strive to explore untapped high technology spheres of manufacturing and innovation.

For instance, he said, the new cybercity at the Kulim High-Tech Park (KHHP) here could develop information communications technology (ICT) for manufacturing and the agro-based industry.

On the other hand, the Johor Cyberport could specialise in outsourcing and e-logistics, while the MITC Cybercentre in Malacca could specialise in e-commerce and bio-informatics.

Abdullah said this when launching the KHHP's MSC Malaysia Cybercity here yesterday.

The 1,440ha area, with a chain of ICT

facilities generated by the MSC, is the second cybercity in the north, after the MSC Malaysia Cybercity at Bayan Lepas in Penang.

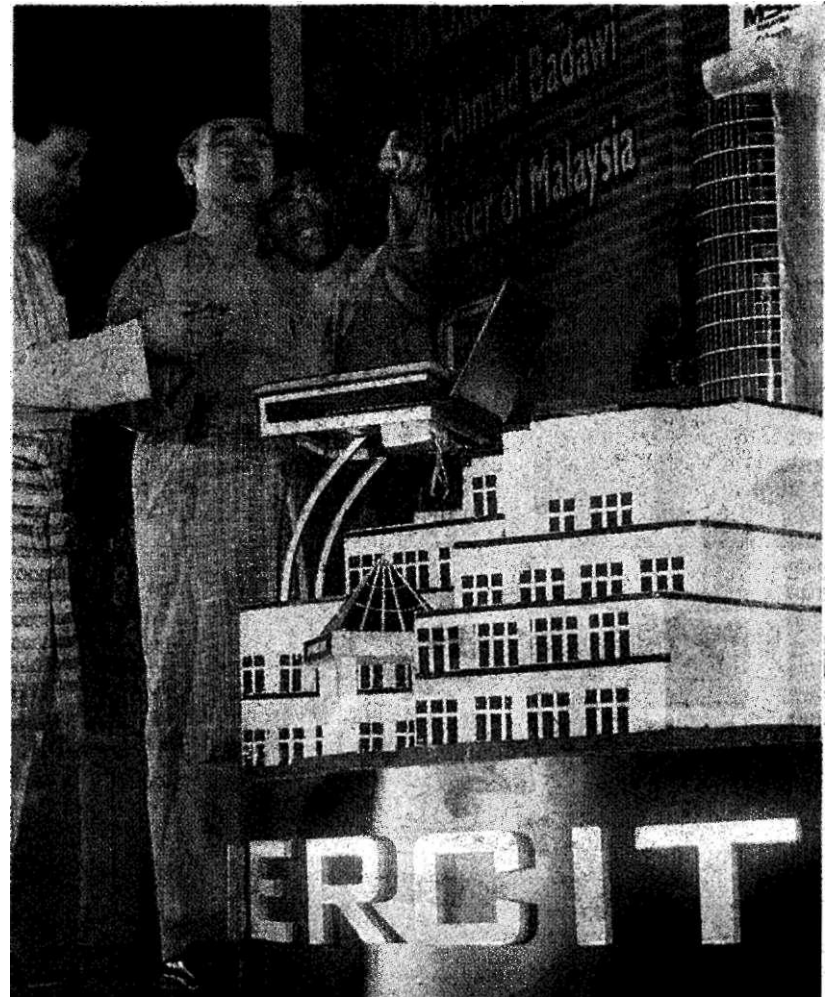
Abdullah said the development of the ICT industry in the northern region should not only benefit multinationals and big companies but also small and medium-scale enterprises, cottage industries and individual businesses.

He said the Government would support and offer incentives to local ICT entrepreneurs to further expand their operations at the KHHP.

"Local entrepreneurs who have successfully developed their products and services in ICT at the KHHP will be given a special grant to enable them to expand their specialisation and business venture."

Abdullah said the ICT sector has been identified as a major sub-sector in Kedah, and would act as a catalyst to strengthen the state's economy.

The Prime Minister added that the upgrading of the KHHP, set up 15 years ago, to MSC status would help sustain the development of the ICT industry in Kedah.



LOOK THERE: Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Dr Jamaluddin Jarjis gesturing as Abdullah looks up after signing on an electronic plaque to launch MSC Malaysia Cybercity at Kulim High-Tech Park yesterday. With them is the park's group CEO Datuk Ahmad Shukri Tajuddin.

He said there were now 36 multinationals, including 18 manufacturing companies, at the park as well as five utility companies and 13 support companies. The total investments of these companies exceeded RM20bil, and they

employed more than 15,000 workers.

"These government incentives are to spur local entrepreneurs to use their expertise in ICT to expand their ventures and market their products internationally," he added.