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Najib: Digital initiative a boon to deserving groups

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak is upbeat that the national digital initiative has benefited deserving groups.

He said the initiative had begun to filter down to the people and organisations that mattered.

"It is heartwarming to note that among the largest groups of beneficiaries are Malaysians in the bottom 40 per cent of the income pyramid, via the eRezeki initiative that enabled them to earn additional income via digital means," Najib said in his opening remarks at the 27th Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) Malaysia Implementation Council Meeting yesterday.

Since the launch of eRezeki earlier this year, he said, there were success stories. Najib cited self-employed Yazid Mohd Zaiki of Kuala Lumpur, who earned an additional income of RM2,000 performing simple digital tasks.

"I was told that MDeC (Multimedia Development Corporation) is

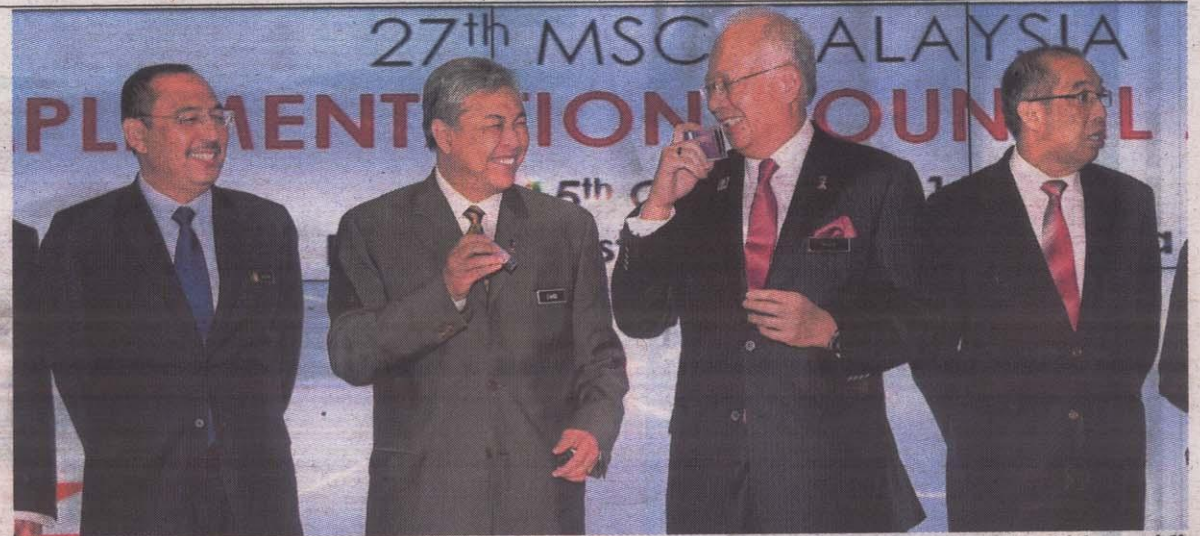
taking the concept of digital income for the rakyat to another level with eUsahawan and I'm looking forward to learning more about it.

"Parallel with this drive to raise the earning ability and standard of living of our people are the concerted efforts to empower the small- and medium-sized enterprises through digital means, in particular e-commerce.

"As a leader, it is one's responsibility to set the direction on how one can best steer the Digital Malaysia national agenda to the next chapter."

Najib said he was pleased that the digital economy significantly enhanced its contribution to national gross domestic product from 16.38 per cent in 2013 to 17 per cent last year, based on the ICT Satellite Account figures released by the Statistics Department.

"Considering that 17 per cent was the 2020 target initially set by Digital Malaysia, it is evident that our dig-



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi getting a sniff of a herbal soap selected for the eUsahawan digital initiative by Multimedia Development Corporation at Perdana Putra in Putrajaya yesterday. Flanking them are Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak (right) and his deputy Datuk Jallani Johari. Pic by Mohd Fadli Hamzah

ital economy is heading in the right direction."

He said fundamental to the national digital economy was MSC Malaysia.

Since its inception in 1996, he added, MSC Malaysia had contributed over RM295 billion in revenue to the economy, RM283 billion worth of investments and more than 147,000 jobs.

"MSC Malaysia also continues to attract investments from world-class and cutting-edge companies in a wide range of industries," he said, adding that the rise of "digital natives" would have implications for the country as the Statistics Department had projected that 50 per cent of the workforce would be millennials by 2020.

"What are their expectations from the government and how can we communicate what skill set they will need to handle the jobs of the future and how do we engage them?"

"These are questions we have to ponder even as we set to provide them with the technological advancement that they have come to expect," said Najib.

He said email users sent 204 million messages every minute in the hyperconnected world, while Google received four million search queries, Facebook users shared 2.46 million pieces of content, the Twitterverse moved 277,000 tweets, WhatsApp users shared 347,222 pictures, Instagram users posted 216,000 photos and the Apple community downloaded

48,000 new apps.

This year alone, one trillion photos would be taken and billions shared online by a hyperconnected generation, 92 per cent of whom engaged with at least two devices simultaneously.

"And it doesn't stay static. The digital universe doubles in size every two years.

"By 2020, there will be 50 billion connected devices in the digital realm."

He said he believed Malaysia was well on the way to bridging the analogue and digital spheres in pursuit of the goal of becoming a fully-developed economy, driven by a productive and enlightened citizenry and guided by a forward-looking government.