

Platform for positive change

> Mahathir urges social media providers to continue collaborating with govt

KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday urged social media providers to continue collaborating with the government and law enforcement agencies to ensure that social media remains a platform for positive change.

The prime minister said Malaysia advocates a free and open internet but this has to be within the ambit of the law and cannot be unfettered.

"The rule of thumb is simple - what is illegal offline is almost always illegal online.

"Freedom of speech without any concern for good human behaviour would be a disaster for any society," he said when opening Facebook's office in Malaysia.

Also present were Communications and Multimedia Minister Gobind Singh Deo and

Facebook Malaysia country director Nicole Tan.

Mahathir said another area for stronger cooperation between the government and Facebook would be in the Community Standards Enforcement Report.

"While there is some form of recognition of hate speech, there are other forms of speech that may potentially be a threat to a nation's harmony and national security."

The premier said the government recognised that social media providers have done their best to find automated ways to search and filter inappropriate posts related to child pornography, terrorism and hate speech.

The challenge now, he added, is to address other inappropriate content such as religious sensitivities, political speech, sedition and even human rights issues.

"I am aware that Facebook and a few other social media providers are already working with the Asean Telecommunication Regulators' Council on this and I urge all of you to continue your cooperation in expanding the current list of areas for immediate take-down." - Bernama



(from left) Facebook vice-president of Asia Pacific Dan Neary, Tan, Mahathir, Gobind and Malaysian Communications and Multimedia chairman Al-Ishsal Ishak at Facebook's office yesterday. - **BERNAMAPIX**