

PM's Visit To Silicon Valley Reflects Malaysia's Transparency In Information Technology - Ahmad Shabery

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KEMAMAN, Oct 13 (Bernama) -- Not every foreign leader is allowed to visit the Silicon Valley in San Francisco which is home to "great secrets" of the new media and information technology industry, said Communication and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek.

However, the visit of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to the Silicon Valley and the headquarters of Facebook, Google and Twitter last month reflected the great honour accorded to the Malaysian government for its openness in the global information technology industry, he said.

Ahmad Shabery said Malaysia's transparency in the cyber world and information technology was not something new as the government had come up with the Multimedia Super Corridor way back in 1998.

"It was indeed a great honour (to have been accorded the Silicon Valley visit) because it is needless for them to deal with a government," he said in an interview with Bernama here.

On Sept 25, Najib had a private meeting with Facebook, Inc. chairman and chief executive officer Mark Zuckerberg at the headquarters of the social media giant in Menlo Park.

Najib and Zuckerberg reportedly discussed possible collaboration between Facebook and Malaysia.

The discussions apparently touched on efforts to bridge the digital divide and bring the Internet facility and other digital opportunities to those yet to be linked.

Ahmad Shabery said Facebook was a most-visited website in Malaysia and had up to 12,747,100 users thus far, placing the country on the 18th position among countries in the Facebook statistics.

"Based on that figure, 70 per cent of Malaysians have a Facebook account. We hold to the openness of information flow when we introduced the Multimedia Super Corridor in 1998.

"We hold to that principle and they respect us for that. IT is not a threat although some quarters abuse the facility," he said.

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