

Penyampai : Y.BHG. TAN SRI SAMSUDIN BIN OSMAN  
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Assalamualaikum warahmatullah dan salam sejahtera YBhg. Dato' Dr. Anuar bin Maarof, Deputy Chief Director (ICT) of MAMPU,

YBhg. Dato' Dr. Michael Yeoh, Chief Executive Officer of ASLI,

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, let me thank the joint organisers, MAMPU and ASLI, for inviting me to officiate at the closing of the Malaysian E-Government 2002 Conference. Let me also congratulate all the participants for their contribution in making this Conference a success.

2. To better prepare ourselves in facing the challenges of e-Government, we have gathered here over the last two days to share knowledge, learn best practices, discover enabling technologies, and brainstorm ideas and strategies. I am sure as participants of the Conference over the last two days, you would have found the discussions on the various topics and issues to be highly insightful and informative. The theme chosen for this Conference - Revolutionising Service Delivery is most appropriate and timely because that is what e-Government is basically all about. The success of e-Government is very much dependent on how citizen-centric those services are - where the citizens and businesses are treated like customers by tailoring services to meet their needs rather than the needs of the agency delivering them.

Scope of Conference

3. I am aware that the scope of the Conference is very comprehensive, covering a host of areas such as the challenges and potentials of e-Government, global trends, lessons and experiences from other governments, and changes required in business processes, technology and organisational structure to meet the multi-channel service delivery envisaged for better Government. I am sure participants have been very fortunate to have an extremely knowledgeable and expert set of speakers to offer their views and thoughts on the critical issues related to the various topics that have been featured during the Conference.

4. As you are aware, our e-Government programme has taken off and we have achieved a high degree of success in the various pilot projects that were launched.

Nevertheless, in moving towards e-Government, the challenges have been complex. Technological, legal, administrative, regulatory, social and political forces combine to create a delicate mix of stakeholders that must be managed in the transition to online Government.

Ladies and gentlemen, The Transformation Process

5. The transformation comes not just from moving services online, but also from redesigning the organization and processes to put the citizen at the center. Business reengineering and process improvements must be the priority when services are offered for online delivery. As far as possible, a citizen's experience when dealing with the government electronically must be a happy one. He should not have to provide a lot of supporting documentation, or key-in the same personal information each time he transacts electronically. A good example of a transformed process is the Electronic Driving Test Taking capability that is now being offered to the public via the e-Services project. Through this capability, members of the public are allowed to resit for the driving test electronically a number of times on a particular day if they fail. However, I can never stress enough that transformation is only possible with the right governance structure, together with the will to drive change across the whole of Government.

Ladies and gentlemen, The Internet and Malaysia's Ranking

6. The Internet is viewed as an important e- Government platform in providing Government information and services more efficiently to citizens. I am happy to note that several e-Government applications are currently harnessing the powers and the richness of Internet technology for access. However, the full technological potential of the Internet should be exploited further.

7. Malaysia has succeeded in delivering most of the pilot e-Government applications such as e-Services, e- Procurement, Electronic Labour Exchange, Generic Office Environment, and the Project Monitoring System II.

These achievements do provide a sound base upon which to further progress with the implementation of the Electronic Government strategy. However, a lot more needs to be done. A recent United Nation e-Government report shows that among the developing countries of Asia, Malaysia has made e-Government a high priority as it seeks to attain developed nation status. However, it was highlighted that Malaysia's information access measure is relatively low. Malaysia's online services were barely above the interactive level and the citizen- centric component is only minimally present.

Ladies and gentlemen, Portals

8. Whilst the study is only indicative, in this regard, it is timely that our public sector agencies move towards providing greater information access to its clients. We can adopt the concept of portals, a one-stop website to enable users to find exactly the required services without having to decipher the government's set up or agencies' organization charts.

Portal access represents a progression from disparate agency websites that are currently available. A portal's true potential however will continue to be unrealized due to barriers to cross agency cooperation.

As has been shown by other governments, these barriers are starting to be dismantled, as the government, businesses and citizens acknowledge that the benefits of common platforms and information sharing outweigh perceived costs.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Malaysian Civil Service Link

9. While we are on the subject of portals, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight that the public sector has in effect implemented a variant of the true portal. The Malaysian Civil Service Link or MSCL acts as the single information gateway to the websites of all Government agencies on the Internet. To date there are 715 Government agencies with websites that constitutes 85% of the total number of Government agencies. When compared to the number of agencies with websites three years ago, it shows a significant growth of 70 %. Apart from providing information, Government websites also provide online services that are delivered electronically involving a two-way online interaction. As part of the effort in the enhancement of the quality of Government websites, The Best Government Websites Competition has been held for the last two years. Two-way online interaction has been incorporated as a major criterion for the quality websites.

10. Over the last few years, remarkable enhancements have been achieved in terms of the types of services provided through the websites. Some examples of Government services which are now available online includes payment of various local authority's assessment tax and parking compound, the Public Service Department's loan account enquiry and calculation of pension and gratuity, the Election Commission checking of voter's registration, and submission of public complaints to the Public Complaints Bureau. These Government online services constitute 10% of the total number of services provided by Government websites.

11. Since its inception in 1998, the MCSL has undergone major changes. Its registration with several major Internet search engines has also helped established the MCSL on the virtual map and this is evidenced by an increasing number of hits per day from 2,500 in 2001 to 3,500 in the middle of 2002. Due to its popularity, no less than 400 local and international websites have established links to the

MCSL.

12. Without doubt, the MCSL plays an important role in ensuring the realization of the objectives of e-Government. The development of agency website infrastructure that has been spurred by the MCSL programme will further enhance electronic links between the Government, the private sector, and the general public which is a critical component to revolutionizing service delivery.

13. In a similar manner the e-Services project, a pilot under the e-Government flagship is currently being implemented. This pilot project provides the capability for businesses and citizens to conduct Government transactions online via multiple electronic delivery channels such as the kiosk and through the Internet. The services that are available via the e-Services project currently are: Payment and Inquiry of JPJ Summons, Inquiry JPJ Kejara points, Payment and Inquiry of TNB Electricity and Telekom Bills. In addition, with the Electronic Theory Test application, the public can also take their JPJ theory test online at fifteen Approved Sites in the Klang Valley. It is envisaged that more government services will be included such as the renewal of driver license, Vehicle Registration services, the payment of PDRM and DBKL summons, the payment of DBKL property assessments and the renewal of DBKL billboard advertisement and business premise licenses. Whilst our approach in providing a single service window for government services has not used the conventional approach, our view is that the provision of multiple access points will provide convenience, improved services and alternative channels which will encourage a faster take-up rate. Of more importance in enabling a seamless experience of e-Government is an integrated infrastructure across Government departments, agencies and Ministries and the shared paradigm of data and information sharing.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Shared Services

14. Of no less importance than single access to government services is the sharing of infrastructure resources across multiple agencies. As all of us are aware, the setting up of the new government administrative capital in Putrajaya has created vast opportunities for the sharing of resources. At present, some 42 agencies have completed the migration involving nearly 12,000 personnel. This has prompted the government initially to offer shared communications services whereby the Putrajaya Government community is already connected to each other and to the Internet via the Putrajaya Campus Network. When fully operational, the Government Precincts will house more than 42,000 personnel. I understand that this broadband, shared network service is being managed by MAMPU in collaboration with the appointed network provider.

Other centralised facilities are also being offered as a spin-off of the e-Government implementation.

A shared data centre and a centralised e-Government help desk have also been recently set up in Putrajaya.

15. On the same note, to facilitate the implementation of e-Government, the Government has also commissioned a shared wide area network infrastructure called the EG\*Net linking up agencies implementing the pilot eGovernment applications. To date, more than 1,000 sites have been connected to the EG\*Net involving leased lines, dial-up lines, ISDN lines and firewalls.

It is expected that by the end of 2007, more than 10,000 sites nationwide will be connected via the EG\*Net.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

16. What I have outlined represents just some of initiatives that have been undertaken in the area of shared services. They are but a miniscule proportion of the true potential of shared services that can be implemented beyond the geographical borders of Putrajaya. Experiences of shared services offered in other parts of the world have shown that not only can they cut costs, they are also a means of ensuring that consistent levels of quality support and service is provided to customers at all times. It is my hope that the idea of shared services will permeate to all levels of Government so as to reap the full benefits

envisaged.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Human Resource

17. Another area that has been impacted by the advent of e-Government is human resource, both in terms of end- users and IT support capabilities. The e-Government flagship represents a centrally planned initiative and spans the breadth and width of the Civil Service. The development phase prompted the creation of government project teams to work closely with the appointed consortia. As the initial pilot projects roll out to the rest of the agencies, there will be new requirements for managing the IT infrastructure in terms of applications, telecommunications, operations, support and maintenance.

18. As end users, the number of employees that will be impacted by e-Government will almost approach the whole of government. The introduction of IT-enabled processes in all the e-Government applications requires training to learn new skills and processes. As the Government seeks to re-invent itself through e-Government, Government personnel at all levels affected by the changes have also to adjust to this new paradigm.

Issues that have to be grappled with, include the changed relationships between themselves and their clients, new services and new modes of delivery of these services.

Strategies to Address Skill Gaps

19. A strategic framework is thus needed to manage the human resource requirements of e-Government. A knowledge-based public sector will require the synergy of two components, i.e. the right quantity and the right quality of human resources. The right quantity ensures the timely availability of human resource in the right numbers while the right quality ensures that human resources made available possess the right attitude, skills and knowledge.

20. A study conducted by the Government in 2001 to assess the manpower requirements to support the application and diffusion of IT in the Malaysian public sector found gaps in terms of numbers and various IT skill clusters. Key strategies that will contribute towards delivering sufficient experienced and competent IT human resource to fill the skill gaps include new approaches.

Outsourcing 21. An ongoing approach is the continued collaboration with the private sector through outsourcing. Skills that are unavailable or limited particularly in relation to specific IT solutions and product skills can be outsourced. It is critical however that transfer of skills and knowledge be pursued aggressively as the Government will still maintain a core base of experienced IT personnel to operate and maintain outsourced projects.

Internal Review

22. Internally, the Government is studying possible reclassification of its current IT occupational classification. In this instance, we will be looking towards industry to identify relevant skill clusters.

This will enable us to better upgrade recruitment, training and other human resource management's related processes. At the same time, the IT Scheme of Service will continually be improved over the years.

Ladies and Gentlemen, The Public Sector ICT Strategic Plan

23. Another very important task that the Government is embarking on currently is the Public Sector ICT Strategic Plan with the objective among others, of establishing an ICT strategic direction and framework for the public sector, identify the thrust areas for ICT implementation in the public sector and to define the standards, procedures and guidelines to support the proposed plan. This plan is crucial because it will provide the roadmap for agencies at the federal, state and local government in implementing e-Government.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Public - Private Sector Cooperation

24. Another very important aspect that I would like to touch upon is in the area of public-private sector cooperation. This conference itself is a manifestation of such collaboration that we have propagated under the Malaysia Incorporated concept. This concept is founded on the belief and confidence that economic growth can be greatly enhanced through close cooperation between both sectors, as both are critical to national development. The rationale behind this policy is clear - the private sector drives national economic growth whilst the public sector provides a supportive environment that enables the private sector to thrive and play a more effective role as the engine of economic growth. Close links between both sectors will result in the more optimal utilisation of resources, and create the synergy to spur economic growth.

25. In a true display of such a partnership, the conceptualisation and planning of the e-Government flagship in 1997 was accomplished in a collaborative manner, bringing together a synergy of efforts from both the public and private sectors on an unprecedented scale. MAMPU, the MDC, lead agencies and experts from some 18 web-shaper companies both local and foreign, contributed to the effort. These companies made major contributions in terms of resources, commitment and expertise towards the project.

26. It is my view that such collaboration should be pursued more vigorously as we spearhead the expansion of e-Government on a wider scale. In this respect, I would like to suggest that MAMPU examine the possibility of establishing a consultative mechanism made up of relevant agencies from the public sector as well as appropriate members from the private sector who are active in the area of ICT. Such a consultative mechanism that meets on a scheduled basis will enable both sides to exchange views and provide feedback on various ICT trends and issues that impact the implementation of e-Government as well as overall ICT development. I am confident that both sectors can derive meaningful benefits and results through such interaction in the true spirit of the Malaysia Inc.

Conclusion

27. I am happy to note that the proceedings of this Conference have enabled participants to appreciate the challenges and issues we face in implementing e- Government. The recommendations and resolutions that have ensued I hope will truly address the needs and concerns of our stakeholders and citizens. New technological developments are providing us with options and solutions that were simply unthinkable of previously. It is up to us to garner these and use them in the best way possible and I can never over- emphasise the important role of the public sector in catalysing and showcasing ICT-based initiatives that can bring real benefits to citizens and businesses.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

28. On that note, allow me to declare the Malaysian E- Government 2002 Conference officially closed.

Thank you.

Wabillahitaufiq Walhidayah Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh