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# National ICT Council to bridge digital divide

BY ROGER DUYONG

**SIBU:** The setting up of the National ICT Council (NIC) will solve problems of reducing the IT divide between rural and urban users.

The Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Datuk Seri Dr. Maximus Johnity Ongkili said the formation of NIC as an integrated centre, was to solve the problems faced by users, especially in the rural schools.

"The National ICT Council was formed last year with the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Tun Razak as the chairman of the council and is an integrated body to help overcome any problem faced by the users of ICT, in our effort to narrow the gap of the ICT divide between the rural and urban schools," he told reporters in a press conference after presenting Malaysian made laptop computers to four selected primary schools here, at SK Bandaran SibU 3.

"Yes, we are aware that there are problems faced by the rural schools after they are

given computers, due to lack of electrical power, connection and breakdowns.

"For this reason the National ICT Council was formed as an integrated centre to solve these problems," he stressed.

The NIC is made up of three ministries, which includes the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, Ministry of Information, Communication and Culture and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation.

Rural schools regularly face problem of unrepaired damaged computers, shortage of uninterrupted power supply, connection and back-up services. This has led to weeks and sometimes months of 'downtime'.

Earlier on, Maximus presented four Malaysian-made laptop computers to four selected school. They were the first schools in Sarawak to receive the laptop computers, with the brand name 'iDOLA'. The small-sized computer, which is not yet available the open market, is a product of MIMOS.

It is using the internet connection system called 'ISDP' - Intelligent Service Delivery Platform - which has been described as an intellectual product of Malaysia patented by MIMOS.

With the ISDP connection system, the students will be

able to access the internet with ease.

The system can also be mounted on cell-phones, desktops and notebooks, which will show among others a portal called Iserve4U.

He said the system would be given to all the schools and government agencies, before the product is introduced to the market.

According to Maximus, the supplied laptop computers, which could be sold at just RM999 a unit, are of excellent and export quality, he explained.

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**MAXIMUS** trying out the ISDP system at SK Bandaran Sibul 3.