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Title : Assistive Technology Centre for hearing-impaired ready next year

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SINGAPORE : A new Assistive Technology Centre for the hearing-impaired will be ready by March next year.

Community Development, Youth and Sports Minister Vivian Balakrishnan announced this at the Samsung Digital Hope 2005 Award ceremony.

This event provides grants to encourage organisations to use technology to improve the lives of the less fortunate.

Ngee Ann Polytechnic students developed the GlovoLogy project, one of 11 winners of the Samsung Digital Hope Awards.

Using an electronic data glove and a pocket PC, the hearing-impaired would be able to communicate with others.

They can perform sign language, which will be captured as text and voice on the pocket PC.

Said Aloysius Goh, co-developer of GlovoLogy, "We moved on to our next challenge, which is getting the pocket PC phone to work so that the hearing-impaired can actually make a phone call."

Dr Balakrishnan said, "GlovoLogy is just one example of what assistive technology can do for the disabled. Every new technological innovation opens up opportunities for persons with disabilities to perform tasks that they were previously incapable of doing. This enables persons with disabilities to better integrate into society and achieve their aspirations."

Another winning project is a Virtual Keyboard by the National University of Singapore.

It will allow the disabled or the elderly to communicate via the Internet. - CNA /ct

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