

DIGITAL NETWORK GETS MCO REDESIGN

This is to cater to higher Internet, mobile data demand says MCMC

KUALA LUMPUR

THE country's digital network has been redesigned to cater to new demands from Internet and mobile data users during the Movement Control Order (MCO) period, said the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC).

Its chairman, Dr Fadhlullah Suhaimi Abdul Malek, said to date, the network had been stabilised since the majority of people were working from home and students were participating in home-based learning sessions.

"We did a survey about two months after MCO 1.0 started in March last year, and it showed an increase in Internet traffic by more than 30 per cent.

"That had resulted in MCMC coordinating the National Digital Infrastructure Lab that gave birth

to the (RM21 billion) National Digital Infrastructure Plan (Jendela) in August last year," he said on Bernama TV's *The Nation* programme, which was aired yesterday, on the topic of "Home-based Teaching and Learning (PDPR): The Way Forward".

Citing a report by Opensignal, Fadhlullah said the Internet speed for both fixed broadband and mobile network in the country was stable, with fixed Internet service at 88Mbps and mobile network reaching 26Mbps on average.

Therefore, he advised people who work at home and have children for home-based learning to use fixed broadband Internet, compared with mobile data networks, for better connections.

"When you work at home, use fixed broadband services coupled with WiFi at your home, which allows you to move from the front of the house to the back of the house," he added.

Fadhlullah said the fiberisation process was crucial in order to provide a future-proof network.

So far, only 5.4 million premises, or 60 per cent, of the nine million premises in the country had been fiberised, he said.

Fadhlullah said that left 40 per cent more to be done over the next four years.

"In the last four months, we have ramped up by 400,000 premises, and this year we are targeting another 1.2 million premises.

"Our target is to fiberise 7.5 million premises by the end of next year, which will account for 85 per cent of the premises."

He said it was a long-haul process and the spectrum itself was limited.

"So we will be upgrading to catch up all the time, and if we get it right, at least the infrastructure level will be closer to what we are seeing in South Korea or Singapore."

Asked to comment on those who criticised the plan, he said he would not say whether the plan was good or bad, only that it was based on evidence and was data-driven.

"As with all plans, until the outcome is seen, there will always be naysayers. I have to take the good, the bad and the ugly."

Jendela, which is being implemented in two phases, aims to provide all Malaysians with quality access to digital connectivity nationwide. **Bernama**