

5G set to roll out by year's end

PM: The technology will serve as a game changer for smart devices

By RASHVINJEET S. BEDI
rashvin@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia will roll out the 5G telecommunications spectrum in stages by the end of this year, said Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

The Prime Minister said the country will emerge as one of the first in this region to build a 5G ecosystem using Internet and cloud services in real-time to enable instant sharing of information.

"Just imagine, 5G technology will serve as a game-changer as more smart services with direct impact will be made available for the well-being of the people.

"This 5G technology not only promises better and faster Internet access service, but more importantly, it enables various important applications to be in the hands of end-users, including health monitoring applications for chronic patients, smart emergency assistance, and special applications for senior citi-



Bold venture: Muhyiddin says the country will emerge as one of the first in this region to build a 5G ecosystem using Internet and cloud services. — Bernama

zens who are living alone," he said at the launch of MyDigital & the Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint yesterday.

Muhyiddin said a total of RM15bil

will be invested over a period of 10 years for the implementation of 5G nationwide.

He said this would create approximately 105,000 job opportunities, with the effort to be carried out by a special purpose vehicle under the Malaysian government.

"This entity will then be given the appropriate spectrum to own, implement and manage the 5G infrastructure," he said.

Muhyiddin also said all licenced telecommunication companies will have equal access to these infrastructures, in marketing their 5G services to their customers.

"This cost-sharing infrastructure will enable telecommunication companies to generate higher returns and, in turn, provide better and cheaper 5G services to consumers."

He said the 5G technology will enhance and boost the country's economic capability in triggering more product and service innovations.

Muhyiddin also said Cloud Service Provider (CSP) companies would

invest between RM12bil and RM15bil in the next five years.

He said the government has so far given conditional approvals to four CSP companies – Microsoft, Google, Amazon and Telekom Malaysia – to build and manage hyper-scale data centres and cloud services.

"This hyper-scale data centres, as well as hybrid cloud services, will be created to increase data storage space, thus reducing operating costs and improving analytical efficiency," he said.

He added the government has also proposed the appointment of three local ICT companies as Manage Service Providers (MSP) to work with CSPs to manage their services to agencies in the public sector.

"This is in line with our intentions to strengthen the capabilities of local companies," said Muhyiddin.

He said the three companies are Enfrasys Solution Sdn. Bhd, Prestariang Systems Sdn. Bhd and Cloud Connect Sdn. Bhd.

Muhyiddin said the government,

through its Cloud First strategy, has targeted the migration of 80% of public data to hybrid cloud systems by the end of 2022, which would help to reduce government costs in information technology management in the long run.

Muhyiddin also said a total of RM21bil will be invested over the next five years through the National Digital Network (Jendela) project to strengthen the existing connectivity, with the fixed-line optical fibre network to cover almost 100% of populated areas in stages – from 7.5 million premises by the end of 2022 to nine million premises by the end of 2025.

He said several telecommunication companies will invest a total of RM1.65bil to strengthen connectivity to the international submarine cable network until the year 2023.

"This will open up more space for faster and more stable international data transfer, thus lowering Internet costs to consumers in Malaysia," he said.