

NATIONAL DIGITAL NETWORK

# SPV TO DEPLOY 5G NATIONWIDE

MCMC: Consumers to benefit from improved coverage, competitive pricing, innovative services

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**T**HE Government of Malaysia Special Purpose Vehicle (GOMSPV) will be tasked with deploying 5G infrastructure and network to improve connectivity in the country.

Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) chairman Dr Fadhlullah Suhaimi Abdul Malek said the initiative, part of the National Digital Network (Jendela) plan,



Dr Fadhlullah Suhaimi Abdul Malek

would see improvements to the existing coverage while addressing issues pertaining to quality of services.

"It would be carried out as a service-based competition,

rather than facilities-based competition, in ensuring consumers benefit from improved coverage, with competitive pricing and choice of innovative services.

"It would also entail clear and regulated activities in accordance with the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998, with a transparent wholesale pricing to service providers, as well as better network and infrastructure sharing.

"5G is an economic imperative and essential to ensure Malaysia's digital competitiveness," he said during a media briefing via Zoom yesterday.

The move will, among others, help create some 105,000 new jobs, reduce the country's dependency on low-skilled foreign labour, reduce the carbon footprint with better technology and improved connectivity, and promote a better quality of life while addressing urban-rural migration.

Fadhlullah said the distribution of the 5G spectrum will not be done through auction, as previously reported, but bought via GOMSPV, licensed to provide the spectrum bands.

He said a full range of commercial 5G services was expected to be rolled out in the last quarter of this year, focusing on places with a dense population and rural areas.

Jendela would provide Malaysians quality access to digital connectivity nationwide, with the Internet as the third "utility" in bridging divides in society, he said.

He said it would be carried out in two phases, with the first phase to be completed next year, focusing on increasing 4G mobile coverage from 91.8 per cent to 96.9 per cent in populated areas, increasing mobile broadband speed from 25Mbps to 35Mbps covering some 7.5 million premises.

It would pave the way for the 5G

planning and priming for infrastructure to be 5G-ready, he said.

The project would also mark the end of 3G networks by the end of this year.

"Meanwhile, phase two, to be carried out from 2022 and beyond, will utilise Fixed Wireless Access and other fit-for-purpose technologies to address further gaps in the digital divide."

He said continued investments in 4G were still required to ensure seamless coverage and quality; and to address the urgent digital divide concerns.

Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin recently announced a 10-year plan for the implementation of 5G technology throughout the country.

The RM15 billion investment is among the four important digital infrastructure initiatives outlined by the government under MyDigital introduced to accelerate innovation and create an effective digital ecosystem.