

Fahmi: Digital economy provides bigger market for Malaysians

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KUALA LUMPUR: The digital economy plays an important role in the Madani Economy framework to create a bigger market for Malaysians so that they are not tied to the local market.

Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil yesterday said the sector also allowed Malaysians to work from any location that had a stable Internet connection. He said the ministry's focus was on providing the infrastructure needed to narrow the digital divide and provide stable and cheap Internet packages, in addition to improving digital literacy skills.

"For example, two days ago I was at Felda Soeharto, Selangor, where several youngsters have migrated to cities to look for jobs.

"However, with the Internet and the digital economy, there are ways for them to earn a high income without having to leave their hometown.

"With the digital economy, we can reduce urban migration, but this will not deny them the opportunities to give their families a better life and earn a good income."

He said this on RTM1's morning programme, Selamat Pagi Malaysia.

He said the government expected the digital economy, which had contributed 23 per cent to the gross domestic product, to increase its contribution to 25.5 per cent in 2025.

Fahmi said he was confident that with the Madani Economy framework launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim on July 27, the marketability of local products under the initiatives planned by the government for the digital economy sector could reach at least 652 million people in Southeast Asia.

Up to July 31, a total of 5,515 of the 7,509 planned 5G sites had been completed to reach 66.8 per cent of coverage of populated areas (CoPA), while 4G coverage had reached 96.2 per cent of CoPA nationwide.

He said for areas that did not have Internet access, some areas could be installed with telecommunication towers and fibre optic cables, but for areas in the interiors or hilly areas, there were four providers of satellite broadband, including Starlink.

He said in addition to the recent installation of the Internet device at the Universiti Teknologi Mara Kuala Pilah campus, the ministry would also install a similar device in an Orang Asli settlement yesterday as proof of concept.

The ministry, he said, would work with other ministries to get information of remote locations or areas where there were no telecommunication towers and to assess their need for Starlink satellite devices. --Bernama