

Govt to continue efforts to increase internet speeds nationwide - Fahmi Fadzil

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Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil said the government will continue efforts to expand coverage and increase internet speed levels nationwide. - NSTP/ASYRAF HAMZAH

SHAH ALAM: Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil said the government will continue efforts to expand coverage and increase internet speed levels nationwide.

He said that currently, only about three per cent of populated areas in the country still do not have internet access.

"Among the efforts that have been made include increasing the capacity of the telecommunications network as well as the capacity of the existing infrastructure and the construction of new telecommunication towers.

"In addition, the government is focusing on the development and improvement of digital facilities in interior and rural areas to ensure equal access to technology and the internet nationwide," he said in his speech when presenting PerantiSiswa devices and launching MYDIGITAL.KKD at Universiti Teknologi Mara, here today.

According to him, his ministry's current priority is to address the existing digital divide.

Commenting on the PerantiSiswa initiative, Fahmi said that as of April 15 last year, a total of 474,311 applications were received and of that number, 368,803 PerantiSiswa recipients had been identified while 105,508 applicants were rejected.

However, he said, of the 105,508 failed applications, the second screening conducted found that 31,699 of them were from the B40 group.

"The 31,699 applications have been screened again as there are set compliances (that need to be complied with), including, are they part-time students, final year students, have they ever received device assistance, then from that number it was found that 23,394 students meet the conditions (to receive the devices)," he said.

According to Fahmi, the initiative involves a (total) cost of RM450 million and has benefited 359,742 students of institutions of higher learning (IPT) from the B40 households.

Meanwhile, he said in order to speed up the distribution of PerantiSiswa devices, his ministry has activated 31 centralised distribution centres nationwide for three weeks starting Feb 17.

"Alhamdulillah, through this centralised distribution, a total of 33,540 devices have been distributed within three weeks. The distribution of the remaining 9,000 devices is expected to be completed soon," he said.

When asked if the initiative to help school students in B40 families will be continued, he said that his ministry is currently in the process of examining the matter.

"We are in the process of examining additional applications, views or perhaps feedback, criticism and so on. At this time, we want to complete the remaining distribution, when the time comes we will make an announcement," he said. -
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