

Use of Starlink a temporary measure, not commercial decision - Fahmi

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Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil speaks at the 'Wangsa Maju Kita Punya' programme held in conjunction with National Day celebration at Taman Tasik Danau Kota. - BERNAMA PIC

KUALA LUMPUR: The government's move to enlist satellite internet providers such as Starlink for underserved areas is viewed as a temporary remedy, with ongoing efforts focused on permanent solutions.

Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil said the utilisation of this service is seen as a practical short-term solution due to its user-friendly nature, rapid internet speed, and reasonable cost.

"In Malaysia, we have four satellite internet service providers, including Starlink.

"This is not a commercial decision. The benefits of this technology are suitable for the purpose of MCMC (Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission)," he said.

He said this to reporters at the 'Wangsa Maju Kita Punya' programme which was held in conjunction with the National Day celebration at Taman Tasik Danau Kota, here today.

Commenting further on satellite internet technology, Fahmi said the government is also in discussions to expand it to schools and health clinics in Sabah and Sarawak.

"For that purpose, I am discussing the matter with the Health Minister (Dr Zaliha Mustafa), Education Minister (Fadhlina Sidek) and the Rural and Regional Development Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi)," he said.

On July 15, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the government plans to install 40 satellite Internet devices from Starlink, at higher education institutions nationwide to help students who were unable to study due to unreliable Internet connectivity, following a virtual meeting with Starlink CEO Elon Musk.

Meanwhile, Fahmi said several telecommunication service providers would offer a 5G Rahmah internet package at a cheaper price, or provide a higher capacity at the base price, which is RM60.

"Insya-Allah, on Aug 31, we will have RM60 for 60GB. However, there will also be companies which offer (the package) at a lower price or higher (data capacity)," he said.

The 5G Rahmah package is a smartphone 5G data device bundle plan where Samsung A14 5G and Honor 90 Lite 5G phones would be offered for as low as RM240 together with a 60GB data plan worth RM60 per month which was announced on Aug 7. The package is expected to be implemented on Aug 31. --
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