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DNB: MoF appoints Asri Hamidon as chairman; Ralph Marshall as CEO

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KUALA LUMPUR, March 1 – The Ministry of Finance (MoF) today announced the appointment of Datuk Asri Hamidon as chairman and Augustus Ralph Marshall as chief executive officer of Digital Nasional Bhd (DNB), to develop 5G technology in Malaysia.

MoF said the appointment of Asri and Ralph Marshall as well as members of the DNB board of directors, followed the announcement on Malaysia's digital blueprint, MyDigital by the prime minister on Feb 18, and announcement on 5G deployment in Malaysia by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission.

DNB's board of directors comprises Datuk Seri Dr. Yusof Ismail, director general of Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU), Prime Minister's Department; Datuk Mohamed Sharil Tarmizi; and Datuk Muthanna Abdullah.

Finance Minister, Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz said it was imperative for the 5G network to be deployed quickly, systematically and professionally to accelerate the country's growth initiatives through

MyDigital, which aims to ensure socio-economic progress and inclusivity for all Malaysians.

“Playing catch-up is not an option as the world increasingly embraces technology such as artificial intelligence, autonomous vehicles, robotics, the Internet of Things, cloud computing and digital twin to create fresh opportunities for future growth.

“Congratulations to the appointees, who collectively offer the right mix of talent and experience to ensure equitable access to 5G capabilities for the people and businesses,” he said.

He said the government looks forward to working closely with the private sector players in the domestic telco industry to help Malaysia realise its 5G aspirations.

“While DNB focus on 5G infrastructure investments, private sector players can focus on developing better products and services, without being saddled by heavy and duplicative capital expenditure.

“This is a win-win situation for all parties, including the telco players, businesses and consumers, as we focus our efforts on being 5G ready by end-2021,” Zafrul added.

DNB will offer 5G services via a wholesale model that is regulated to ensure better transparency and implementation.

It will be managed based on the appropriate governance framework, an open tender process for the 5G infrastructure development, and global best practices to ensure proper controls.

All telecommunications service providers will have open, fair and equal access in obtaining wholesale 5G network services for the development of retail services based on 5G technology.

Members of DNB’s senior management team will be announced in due course, according to the ministry.

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