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Harness data , technology to nurture recovery – Tengku Zafrul

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 9 – Data and technology will be among the key elements in charting Malaysia’s economic recovery post-COVID-19 pandemic, said Finance Minister and National Recovery Plan (NRP) Coordinating Minister, Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Aziz.

He said the government will harness the power of data to help the country become more agile and responsive, underscored by the spirit of inclusivity towards better resilience and shared prosperity.

Tengku Zafrul noted that the Digital Economy Blueprint, or MyDIGITAL, is critical in driving the business sector to compete in the global arena, as it addresses both digital infrastructure and the digital ecosystem.

“The former includes investments through the National Digital Network (JENDELA) project, investments to strengthen connectivity to the international submarine cable network until 2023, as well as a 10-year plan for the implementation of 5G nationwide and in cloud services,” he said.

In a special address during the virtually-held National Recovery Summit today, he said that the efforts also include

strengthening the digital ecosystem, supporting digital adoption as well as privacy and data protection.

As for the country's 5G aspirations, he said the government is also accelerating the development and growth of high-speed, affordable and reliable 5G connectivity and coverage.

"We will kick-start Phase 1 with 10 per cent 5G coverage in Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya and Cyberjaya by end-2021.

"Phase 1b will cover approximately 40 per cent coverage in major cities in Selangor, Johor, Penang, Sabah and Sarawak by end-2022, followed by the rest of the country in stages with 100 per cent national coverage targeted by 2024," he said.

Combined, these measures will address the near-term efforts to place Malaysia's reopening on a stronger footing while ensuring that the nation is well-positioned to take full advantage of the megatrends of tomorrow in the mid and longer-term, he said.

Tengku Zafrul also expressed his hope that the NRP and Budget 2022 would serve as a template, not just on how to exit the pandemic, but also on how to navigate the more pressing challenges that lie ahead.

"To that end, I call on all parties, government, private sector and civil society organisations to come together as one 'Keluarga Malaysia'. Let's come together, and win together," he added.

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