

MEASAT-3D LAUNCH SET TO CLOSE DIGITAL DIVIDE

CONNECTme NOW to serve over 2 million people in remote areas in next 3 years

FARAH ADILLA
CYBERJAYA
bt@nst.com.my

MEASAT Global Bhd is set to close the gap between urban and rural areas with the launch of the RM1.2 billion Measat-3d satellite in the next two weeks.

Using the high throughput satellite capacity on Measat-3d, Malaysians will be able to enjoy high-speed Internet, whether in urban areas or hard-to-reach villages, via Measat's CONNECTme NOW satellite broadband service.

Chief operating officer Yau Chyong Lim said Measat's CON-

NECTme NOW will link 10,000 sites in the next three years to serve more than two million people in remote areas that currently have limited or no access to high-speed broadband.

Measat has so far rolled out more than 3,000 CONNECTme NOW sites nationwide, with a majority in the remote areas of Sabah and Sarawak.

Yau said other telcos can also tap the new satellite to offer data, voice and video services to the population yet not covered by fibre connectivity or wireless broadband.

"Measat is proud to support the government's initiatives to close the digital connectivity gap by expanding high-speed Internet



Measat Global Bhd chief operating officer Yau Chyong Lim speaking at a media briefing in Cyberjaya yesterday. PIC BY AIZUDDIN SAAD

coverage in under-connected rural areas.

"With Measat-3d and CONNECTme NOW, we look forward to providing Internet access for the unserved population," he said during a media briefing and tour of the Measat facility here yesterday.

He said Measat had initiated a series of satellite initiatives to improve broadband services and cellular backhaul in the next three to five years to accelerate the formation of a digitally inclusive society.

On a wider scale, the company intends to replicate and grow the

CONNECTme NOW service regionally in the longer term.

"To support this growth, we need to significantly expand our satellite broadband capacity with a strategy that includes geostationary and non-geostationary satellites," Yau added.

The Measat-3d satellite is the most comprehensive and complex satellite in Measat's fleet.

The multi-mission satellite, which uses the Eurostar 3000 built by Airbus, is scheduled to be launched on an Ariane 5 rocket from the European Spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.

It will complement the co-lo-

cated Measat-3a and Measat-3b satellites at the 91.5° East orbital hot spot, replacing old capacity and building resiliency for Measat's fleet of satellites.

The new satellite will also restore unrivalled in-orbit redundancy and expansion capacity for satellite television and IPTV provider Astro's direct-to-home service together with broadcasting and telecommunications services in the region.

Measat is a supplier of communication and video services to broadcasters, direct-to-home platforms and telco operators in 130 countries.