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# PM LAUNCHES FREE DIGITAL TV SERVICE

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It will bridge the  
country's digital gap

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**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak yesterday launched the country's initiative to kick-start its foray into Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) through myFreeview's free service, available nationwide.

MYTV Broadcasting Sdn Bhd (MYTV) has been appointed by the government to develop and operate the infrastructure and network of DTT in the country.

In his speech, Najib said the service was expected to bridge the digital gap in Malaysia as the country geared towards becoming a developed nation.

Malaysia's broadcast service is expected to cease its analogue format by June next year along with several other Asean countries.

"Free-to-air television in analogue spectrum has been in the country since Dec 28, 1963.

"From then on, we have experienced development in broadcast, content and coverage.

"However, the growth of terrestrial TV is limited because of analogue technology and high-radio wave."

Najib said in 2004, the government drew up the National Broadcast Digitalisation Master Plan, which subsequently, spun off the current National Broadcast Digitalisation Project.

"That is the manifestation of the government's efforts to improve the quality of life, on a par with other developed countries, by transforming the free-to-air television through digital technology."

Najib said the government would benefit from the implementation of DTT since the previous spectrums used by the analogue system could be repurposed for improving cellular and bandwidth service.

"We are moving from analogue, towards digitalisation. This is to close the digital gap in our country. With analogue, we can only have one channel in a single spectrum. But with digital, we can have 15 channels in the same spectrum."

He said viewers could enjoy high-definition shows for free, courtesy of free-to-air broadcast companies such as Media Prima Bhd, TV Alhijrah, Bernama News TV and Radio Televisyen Malaysia.

"I am happy to note that myFreeview service is free, without monthly subscription. Viewers will have better access to HD content.

"In the future, viewers will have

access to online shopping, mobile Internet TV and UHD TV. There will be more apps available on myFreeview."

Najib said myFreeview was also expected to provide growth advertisement revenue and job opportunities, especially in the creative industry.

"It will directly impact the economy and creative content development is slated to expand positively."

Najib said as of now, the government and MYTV would provide free myFreeview decoders to 4.2 million households listed under BRIM.

"I have been informed that as of now, myFreeview is broadcast through 24 broadcast stations nationwide, covering 87 per cent of the populated areas in the country in Phase One and Two.

"The coverage is expected to increase to 98 per cent by the fourth quarter of 2017."

A live broadcast of the launch was shown on TV9 and RTM2.

*Page 1 pic: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak trying out a MYTV remote control at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday. With him are Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai (right) and Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak (second from right).*