

# 'Telco to pay for extra costs'

## PM: Govt will not bear additional amount in switch to dual network

NO extra financial implication will be borne by the government following the decision to move away from the single wholesale network, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said this was because private telco service providers which were involved have agreed to finance the dual network entirely.

Anwar also said that the decision to transition to the dual network was to break the monopoly by Digital Nasional Berhad (DNB).

"The justification for the decision includes ending the monopoly issue linked to DNB and to offer more network options for the public, which will then overcome single failure issues.

"It will also ensure the participation of telcos is more comprehensive to guarantee the sustainability of the telecommunication industry in Malaysia," he said yesterday during the Prime Minister's Question Time.

Anwar was responding to Rodziah Ismail's (PH-Ampang) questions on whether the decision to move away from the single wholesale network model will result in losses in terms of breach of international contracts, security risks, additional financial implications for the government and increased 5G prices for consumers.

On service prices, Anwar said telcos are bound to the terms set by DNB, which will not allow them to increase costs.

"This transition to a dual network model will not increase the price of existing 5G services that consumers are currently enjoying," he said.

The wholesale price of 5G for



### Giving answers:

Anwar speaking during the Prime Minister's Question Time in the Dewan Rakyat.

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both networks will be equivalent or cheaper than the existing wholesale price offered by DNB, which is RM30,000 per Gigabit per second (Gbps) or equivalent to approximately 13sen per gigabyte.

Anwar added that the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) will be empowered to monitor and regulate the service provided by the telcos.

"MCMC's role is currently very limited. The rules and laws will soon be streamlined so that the commission can effectively regulate telcos even after the comple-

tion of the dual network model," he said.

The commission will also be responsible to ensure cybersecurity alongside other agencies, including Cybersecurity Malaysia and National Cyber Security Agency.

On May 3, Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil said that DNB will continue to roll out the 5G network infrastructure in Malaysia until 80% coverage is achieved by the end of this year.

At a press conference later, Tasek Gelugor MP Datuk Wan Saiful Wan Jan claimed that the dual network model that will

replace DNB will not eradicate monopoly, but promote a duopoly.

"As you see for 3G and 4G networks, there are many providers, but for 5G, there are only two that will control the wholesale and retail markets.

"The government is not actually increasing competition, but reducing it, leaving consumers on the losing end," he said.

Wan Saiful also asked Anwar to explain why only DNB was the focus when it came to dismantling monopolies, citing how the provision of electricity and water services were also monopolised.