

**RM1.2 Billion To Improve Telecommunication Infrastructure – Najib  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 23 (Bernama) -- The government, through the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), has allocated RM1.2 billion to improve the telecommunication infrastructure in the country.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the allocation was, among others, for rural broadband projects, which will see a four-fold increase in Internet speed from 5 megabytes per second (Mbps) to 20 Mbps.

The allocation is also for National Fibre Backbone Infrastructure, high-speed broadband and undersea cable system, he said when tabling the 2016 Budget themed "Prospering The Rakyat" at the Dewan Rakyat here today.

Najib, who is also Finance Minister, said a sum of RM250 million was also allocated for the national broadcasting digitalisation project to enhance audio visual quality and provide value-add to TV content, as well as interactive data transactions.

He said, since independence, the wellbeing of the rural populations had remained the government's priority.

"To date, under the Barisan Nasional government, rural road coverage has increased from 46,000 km in 2009 to 51,000 km, while 98 per cent of rural areas have access to electricity and almost 95 per cent have access to water supply," he said.

Najib said in the 2016 budget, RM1.4 billion was provided to build and upgrade 700 km of rural roads nationwide and a sum of RM200 million was provided for the upgrading of roads in Felda settlements.

A total of RM878 million was allocated for the rural electrification project covering 10,000 houses and RM568 million for the rural water supply project to benefit 3,000 houses.

In addition, he said RM60 million was provided for the Social Amenities Programme for drainage projects to mitigate floods with emphasis to be given to states affected by floods, such as Kelantan, Kedah, Terengganu, Pahang, Sabah and Sarawak.

"As a catalyst for entrepreneurship in rural areas and for rural communities, RM70 million is allocated for continuation of the Rural Business Challenge and the Sustainable Rural programmes, and RM67 million is allocated to the MARA Bus Transport Project for operating buses on uneconomic routes in rural areas," he said.

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