

# Telekom to carry out 3G trials this year

BY HANIM ADNAN

TELEKOM Malaysia Bhd expects to carry out trials on third generation (3G) high-speed mobile Internet services this year but will only make a decision on rollout next year, said chief executive Datuk Dr Md Khir Abdul Rahman.

Telekom Malaysia plans to first study the

impact of 3G services implementation in other countries, Khir added.

"We hope to arrive at some decision after looking at the experience of those countries," he told reporters after the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Telekom Malaysia subsidiary TM Net Sdn Bhd and INTI Universal Holdings in Subang Jaya yesterday. (See page 3)

Describing 3G as a dynamic interaction application, Khir said the service would cost between what telecommunication companies could offer and what customers would like to pay.

The government has approved plans by Telekom Malaysia and Maxis Communications Bhd to roll out 3G ser-

vices and expects to award the 3G-spectrum by the end of this month.

Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission chairman Tan Sri Nuraizah Abdul Hamid had said recently that 3G services were expected to hit the streets early next year, and details would be given after the spectrum blocks are assigned.

Besides having to pay a RM50mil fee for the 3G spectrum, the two companies would likely spend RM300mil to RM400mil each to build 3G infrastructure in the initial four years, and up to RM2bil each over the whole 15-year tenure of assignment.

On TMNet's broadband Internet service, Streamyx, launched last year, Khir said: "We expect the number of subscribers to hit 200,000 by the end of this year, from about 50,000 currently."

He said it would be "just a matter of time" before the "slight teething" problems that have irked Streamyx users were resolved.

TMNet has a total Internet-user base of 1.6 million.

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Datuk Dr Md Khir Abdul Rahman