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We are living in a technological era where almost everything is digitised and done virtually. A lot more things are going online like making payments, trading, banking, bookings, news, studies, and meetings. With this new culture, an efficient internet and data network is crucial in sustaining the country's economy and supporting businesses across all industries.

It is the Ministry's plan to expedite the implementation of 5G technology and strengthen cybersecurity to protect the country from cyber threats. We want to ensure internet connectivity is integrated nationwide and push for a more vibrant digital economy.

This is why we introduced the National Digital Infrastructure Plan (JENDELA), which is aimed to expand fixed-broadband access, expand 4G mobile broadband coverage and lay a solid foundation for 5G. The National Fiberisation and Connectivity Plan (NFCP) is also currently underway. This plan provides a direction for the implementation of policies and initiatives in relation to building a better and secured internet network.

To strengthen cybersecurity, we are working with CyberSecurity Malaysia (CSM) to implement SiberKasa, aimed at developing and strengthening our country's cybersecurity infrastructure. CSM also has plans to expand involvement at ASEAN and international levels. Therefore, we are committed to working together with other nations, to learn and seek recommendations from the experts. We have also been actively involved in the ASEAN Cyber Security Cooperation Strategy which addresses the closer cooperation and coordination among the ASEAN Member States (AMS) on cybersecurity policy development and capacity-building initiatives.

Back in 2017, an online attack sent ripples through one of the European country as it struck banks, government ministries, media organisations, mobile providers, power grid, postal service and the main airport. The attack spread like wildfire and the heads of security found themselves in an uphill battle as computers and systems were wiped out. Attackers literally had the power to intercept passwords, capture administrative information, delete logs and encrypt.

Soon neighbouring countries realised that this attack could potentially spread across the seas to their respective countries, and it actually did. Major cyber threats and attacks like these are another reason why strong bilateral relations are crucial to enable all parties to work together to counter the attacks and be prepared for the worst.

With more people than ever working and shopping from home – and sharing their financial details with online retailers around the world – the risk of being compromised or scammed has never been higher. According to the 2021 Unisys Security Index, Cyberattacks have increased exponentially, driven largely by ransomware attacks, which were up 600% globally over the previous year. Identity theft, unauthorized access and misuse of personal information remain a great concern, especially now when most are working remotely from the office. We have heard of several cyber threats, ransomware attacks, data aggression and other security concerns that affected industries and governments worldwide.



Therefore, to improve Malaysia's cyber-preparedness, we have implemented a national cybersecurity policy to overcome cyber-attacks and cyber threats, including protecting netizens' personal information. This policy will support the growth of our cybersecurity industry, including enhanced cybersecurity incident response and digital forensics with data analytic capabilities. We are also in talks with other ministries to amend or introduce new laws to govern cybercrime and cyber-bullying.

Therefore, a platform like Cyber Digital Services, Defence & Security Asia (CyberDSA) is important, as it can connect us with the latest cyber security knowledge, technologies, applications, systems and solutions from around the world. One of the highlights of the inaugural CyberDSA is the roundtable session that will be held between the heads of cybersecurity agencies or counterparts in the region and I truly am looking forward to seeing the latest developments in this arena.

