

**PERSIDANGAN KEBANGSAAN MENGENAI MASYARAKAT BERMAKLUMAT
NATIONAL SUMMIT ON INFORMATION SOCIETY (NASIS)
7 – 8 SEPTEMBER 2005
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

Date of issue: 3rd September 2005

Doc. S5-2

Session 5: Bridging the Digital Divide

**Is there any affordability gap in Internet access in
Brunei Darussalam?**

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(Thursday, 8th September 2005, 10.30am – 12.15pm)

Is there any affordability gap in Internet Access in Brunei Darussalam?

A) Types Of Internet Access

1. Dial-up Internet Access

- Uses modem to connect to the Internet
- Speed: from 96000bps to 56kbps
- Prior to the availability of broadband services

2. Broadband (ADSL) Internet Access

- Also known as ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line)
- Uses router and network card
- Speed: from 56kbps up to 124mbps (Up to 25x times faster than a standard 56Kbps dial-up modem)
- Benefits of ADSL
 - ✓ 'Always-On' Service
 - ✓ Phone / Internet Simultaneously

3. Leased Line

- Uses router and network card
- Speed: from 124mbps to 1.5gbps

4. Local wireless

5. ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network)

B) Minimum Requirements To Get Connected

1. Computer system

- ✓ **Processor** - Intel Pentium running at 200 MHz or higher.
- ✓ **Operating system** - Windows 98 Second Edition, Windows Millennium Edition (Windows Me), Windows 2000, or Windows XP.
- ✓ **Memory** – 64MB of RAM for windows 98 n 128MB of RAM for Windows 2000, Windows Me and Windows XP.
- ✓ **Display** - Super VGA (800 x 600) or higher-resolution monitor with 256 colors.
- ✓ **Hard drive** - 75 MB or higher.

2. a) EITHER Modem (56kbps) using Telephone Jack from telephone port.

b) OR Network card /wireless network card (10 / 100 kbps) using Ethernet Jack from router.

3. Phone line

4. Subscribe to local Internet Service Provider (i.e. BruNet or Simpurnet in Brunei) for Internet Access

C) Importance Of Being Connected

- Global advance towards an ICT world
 - ✓ Increase in Internet usage in the region & worldwide
- Essential for
 - ✓ Communications - smtp/email, instant messaging, e-conference, forums
 - ✓ Education - online courses, news/information on websites
 - ✓ Business/money matters - e-commerce or e-marketing i.e. selling/buying products or shares; e-banking
 - ✓ Entertainment - music, movies, games

D) Comparison Of Connection Rates Between Brunei & Other Countries

Comparison with countries in the region

1. Dial-Up Connection Rates
 - a) Standard rate per hour
 - b) Monthly subscriptions
2. Broadband Connection Rates
 - a) Monthly Charges

E) Affordability Gap

1. Is there a gap between the cost of Internet access and how much the majority of people in Brunei can afford to pay?
2. Cost of monthly Internet charges out of average total monthly expenditure
3. Is there a need to bridge the gap by lowering Internet charges?

F) Proposal To Reduce Internet Charges in Brunei

More Internet Service Providers (ISPs)

- Currently only 2 ISPs in Brunei i.e BruNet & Simpurnet
- Competition will force prices to lower