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**B5**

## **PLDT expands coverage of internet connectivity**

PLDT Inc. expanded the coverage of its fiber-fast internet connectivity as it ended 2017 with four million homes covered, nearly 43 percent more than the previous year.

In a statement, PLDT said it also expanded the capacity of its fixed broadband network to over one million ports last year, double the number two years ago.

The biggest increase in the number of ports or actual broadband lines were posted in the provinces of Cavite, Pampanga, Bataan, Zambales, Cebu, Pangasinan, Bulacan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Laguna last year.

As a result, Oscar Reyes Jr., PLDT senior vice president and head of consumer market development, said customers have benefited in terms of having seamless internet connectivity.

"Because of this rapid expansion of fiber-fast world-class connectiv-

ity, PLDT customers are able to enjoy seamless viewing of their favorite movies, listen to their music playlist, play online games without any lags, or simply visit and engage on their social networking sites," he said.

PLDT is making fiber-fast connectivity available to customers through the installation of fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) facilities and the "fibrization" of existing copper-based network through the use

of hybrid technologies VDSL and G.fast which are being used in Germany and South Korea, respectively.

Through PLDT's FTTH service, the company is able to deliver speeds of up to 1 Gbps.

Using the hybrid fiber, meanwhile, allows PLDT to provide data speeds ranging from 100 Mbps for VDSL, up to 500 Mbps for G.fast over copper lines.

PLDT has also been working with local government units to convert areas into "smart cities" by providing fiber coverage.

In March last year, PLDT named Toledo City in Cebu as its first "Smart City."

This was followed by General Santos City in Mindanao, Naga in the Bicol Region, South Metro Manila which includes Parañaque and Las Piñas, East Metro Manila which includes Pasig and Antipolo, and central business districts like Rockwell in Makati and Bonifacio Global City.

Cavite, meanwhile, was named PLDT's first "Smart province" late last year.

As the telco and digital services provider expands the reach of its ultrafast broadband coverage, increasing the capacity of its fixed networks forms part of PLDT's over P50 billion capital expenditures allocation per year starting this year until 2020.

PLDT chairman and chief executive officer Manuel V. Pangilinan has said the company, which set its capital expenditures at more than P50 billion this year, the highest allocation ever, would keep spending at that level every year until 2020 to supercharge both its fixed and mobile networks.

"By 2019, virtually all of PLDT's 1.2 million copper-based DSL subscribers will enjoy fiber-fast internet. PLDT will further expand its ultrafast broadband coverage to six million homes passed by 2020, reaching more areas of the country," he said.

He added that "within the next 12 to 18 months, world-class internet services on PLDT's super-charged fixed and mobile networks will be available to more Filipinos in more parts of the country."

— Louella Desiderio

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