

Smart Roaming Advisory Articles for Malaysian Travellers

Avoid Bill Shock — Stay Connected with Confidence!

➤ Why This Advisory Matters





Whether you're travelling for leisure, work, or a spiritual journey like Hajj or Umrah, it's important to stay connected but without burning through your wallet.


Many travellers get caught out by confusing roaming terms or auto settings they didn't know were active. This guide is for everyone from young explorers to our seasoned elders to help avoid costly mistakes.

➤ What is Roaming?

Roaming allows your phone to use a foreign network when you're overseas. This lets you make calls, send messages, and use mobile internet but unless you have a roaming plan, it's often much more expensive than local use

➤ Common Roaming Terms — What They Actually Mean

Term Used by Telcos	What You Should Know
 "Worldwide" / "Global"	Often covers selected countries only. ✓ Ask if your specific destination is included.
 RM15/day Voice Pass	May be triggered even by missed or rejected calls. Ask how to avoid this.
 "Strongest Signal"	Your phone may connect to a non-preferred network, which can cost more. ✓ Manually select the preferred network.
 Cruise Roaming	Not usually included. Satellite charges can reach RM30–RM60 per MB. ✓ Ask if maritime or cruise roaming is covered.

Term Used by Telcos	What You Should Know
 Auto-Renew	Some passes automatically renew daily. ✓ Check and disable this in your telco app.

➤ **Special Guidance for Hajj & Umrah Travellers**

Our elderly pilgrims may face added difficulties, such as:

- Unfamiliarity with phone settings
- Roaming that activates automatically
- Unsure if connected to the right network
- Relying on children or travel agents for help

➤ **Tips for Safer Use:**

- Turn OFF data roaming by default (Settings > Network > Roaming).
- Activate roaming only after receiving confirmation via SMS from your telco.
- Manually select trusted networks in Saudi (e.g. STC, Mobily, or Zain).
- Use hotel Wi-Fi or Masjidil Haram Wi-Fi for free WhatsApp/Telegram calls.
- Avoid using mobile near cruise ports or international waters it may switch to costly satellite networks.
- Ask your children, agent, or group leader to double-check your setup.

➤ **Top Roaming Tips (For Everyone)**

- ✓ Activate your roaming pass *before* flying.
- ✓ Use your telco's app to monitor data usage and pass validity.
- ✓ Disable auto-updates and cloud sync (they consume data quietly).
- ✓ Use messaging apps (WhatsApp/Telegram) instead of SMS or direct calls.
- ✓ Set a budget cap or use prepaid options for control.

- ✓ Don't rely on the word "international" — ask if your destination is included.
- ✓ Remember "unlimited" often means slower speeds after a certain limit (Fair Usage Policy).

➤ Where to Find Roaming Settings on Your Phone

Android

Settings → Mobile Network → Roaming → Turn OFF or choose network manually

iPhone

Settings → Cellular → Cellular Data Options → Data Roaming → OFF / Network Selection

➤ Pre-Travel Checklist

Task	✓ Done?
Roaming pass activated & confirmed	✓
Manually selected the preferred network	✓
Data roaming OFF until ready to use	✓
Auto-renew/top-up disabled in telco app	✓
Family/group leader knows your setup	✓
Saved the list of covered countries/networks	✓

Example: Roaming in Saudi Arabia

Telco A

RM29/day Middle East Pass

Works ONLY with: STC, Mobily, Zain

Connects to cruise satellite or unknown network? You pay extra.

Speed slows down after 500MB–2GB (Fair Usage Policy)

➤ **Real Cases to Be Aware Of**

Telco	What to Watch Out For
Telco A	Charges RM15/day even for missed calls. Auto-renews pass.
Telco B	Roaming is pre-activated; requires RM200 deposit.
Telco C	“Unlimited” plan covers only 71–76 countries.
Telco D	May connect to wrong signal, causing extra charges.
Telco E	Daily roaming pass slows after quota; high pay-per-use charges apply.

➤ **Final Advice — Be Informed, Not Surprised**

- ✓ Don’t assume “international” or “global” means everywhere — check your country.
- ✓ Don’t activate roaming until you’ve subscribed to the correct pass.
- ✓ Ask your telco:
 - “Is my destination covered?”
 - “Who is the roaming partner in that country?”
 - “Does this plan cover cruise or maritime roaming?”
- ✓ Use hotel Wi-Fi or buy a local SIM if you’re staying longer than a week.

➤ **Roaming Should Serve You — Not Surprise You**

Stay connected, but stay in control.

Ask. Check. Confirm. Especially during meaningful travels like Hajj or Umrah protect your peace of mind, and your pocket.

