

RM20bil aid for the people

PM announces sixth economic stimulus package to help in recovery

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PEMERKASA
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PUTRAJAYA: The government has unveiled its sixth economic stimulus package, the RM20bil People and Economic Strategic Empowerment Programme (Pemerksa), which, among others, will see targeted assistance given to the people and sectors still affected by the pandemic.

Focusing on 20 initiatives, Pemerksa is also aimed at giving the economy a jump-start and to support business continuity, as the government reaffirms its commitment to care and listen to the people.

Unveiling Pemerksa, Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin identified five focus areas to promote economic recovery – control the spread of Covid-19, accelerating economic recovery, strengthening Malaysia's competitiveness, ensuring inclusivity by reducing development gaps within regions and communities, and transforming the economy.

Of the RM20bil under Pemerksa, RM11bil is fresh fiscal injection by the government.

Muhyiddin said among the efforts in driving economic recovery was to revitalise the tourism and retail

sectors which had been hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Prime Minister said to alleviate the burden and to support the recovery of the tourism sector, the government would extend tourism tax and service tax exemptions on accommodation provided by hotel operators until Dec 31, 2021.

"We will also extend tax incentives to tour companies until the year of assessment 2022, allow deferment of monthly income tax instalments from April 1 to Dec 31, 2021 to companies in the tourism and industries such as cinemas and spas.

"The sector will also be provided entertainment duty exemption on admission fees to entertainment venues such as theme parks, stage performances, sporting events and competitions as well as cinemas in the Federal Territories," Muhyiddin said in a special address yesterday.

The scope of special relief on individual income tax of up to RM1,000 will be expanded to include expenses on travel packages provided by travel agents registered with the Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry (Motac) while the HRDF levy

exemption for affected businesses under the tourism and retail sector will be extended until June 2021.

Muhyiddin said in addition, the government had agreed to a one-off special assistance grant of RM3,000 to more than 5,000 tourism agencies registered with Motac.

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For the rakyat: Muhyiddin announcing Pemerksa, which was aired live on all television channels and social media platforms. – Bernama

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Motac, which is expected to benefit more than 4,000 Malaysian Homestay Programme hosts or entrepreneurs.

"When most of us are vaccinated, the government will consider allowing interstate travel in stages and may even establish a special green lane for border travel involving air transport.

"At the moment, the government

will need time to assess all the necessary aspects and weigh the risks before a decision is made," he said.

To assist cash flow and reduce operating cost for hotel operators, theme parks, convention centres, shopping malls, local airline offices and travel and tour agencies, a special discount on electricity bills of 10% will be extended for another three months until June 30.

The total cost borne by the government for this extension is RM135mil.

The Prime Minister said the Perikatan Nasional government remained committed to moving forward in planning various economic recovery strategies for the well-being of the rakyat.

"The government has done its level best to ensure that no groups are left behind from receiving government's benefits.

"Perikatan as a caring government always listens and cares about the well-being of the people.

"This trust will be shouldered responsibly and sincerely for the sake of the people and the nation," he added.

Muhyiddin also urged the public to register for the Covid-19 vaccination, advising all not to delay because the sooner people get vaccinated, the sooner everyone can enjoy a normal life.