

PM launches initiative to expand retail digitalisation to rural areas

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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob delivers his speech during the launch of the National ReDI Programme and the rebranding of the Jualan Murah Keluarga Malaysia programme at Dataran Kerayong in Bera. - NSTP/FARIZUL HAFIZ AWANG

BERA: The government will ensure that the digitalisation agenda, especially the use of e-wallets, is expanded to rural areas through the Retail Sector Digitalisation Initiative (ReDI), said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

He said ReDI, spearheaded by the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry, was a timely and proactive initiative supported by Bank Negara Malaysia to create an inclusive digital society.

He said there was a wide gap in the adoption of cashless payment systems between urban and rural areas and the government did not want rural communities to be left behind in the digital economy.

"The government will ensure the digitalisation agenda is the main focus at all levels, including expanding electronic payment methods nationwide.

"The government is confident the transition to electronic payment methods, such as e-wallets, will be easy, fast and secure. It will help traders manage their businesses better and more efficiently."

He said this at the launch of the National ReDI Programme and the rebranding of the Jualan Murah Keluarga Malaysia programme at Dataran Kerayong here today.

Present were Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Alexander Nanta Linggi, Public Service Department director-general Datuk Seri Mohd Shafiq Abdullah, Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry secretary-general Datuk Azman Mohd Yusof and state Public Works, Transport and Health Committee chairman Datuk Seri Norolazali Sulaiman.

To encourage cashless payments, Ismail Sabri said the government would be offering Program Jualan Malaysia e-vouchers, involving an allocation of RM2 million, from Aug 30 to Dec 31.

The e-vouchers can be downloaded from the MySales Tracker application.

For the Bera parliamentary constituency, Ismail Sabri, who is Bera member of parliament, said a RM20 e-wallet incentive would be provided to 1,000 people and RM100 credit would be given to 1,500 people from selected groups in each state constituency in Bera.

He said community awareness about doing business and getting services online was one of the lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Online transactions have become the new norm.

"Cashless payment, which has been the catalyst for the country's digital economy, is projected to contribute 25 per cent to the gross domestic product by 2025

"According to the Payment Network Malaysia (PayNet) Digital Payment Insight Study 2022, the percentage of Malaysians using cash for payments fell 11 points to 78 per cent from 89 per cent before the pandemic."

Among the initiatives implemented to encourage cashless payments is ePemula, involving an allocation of RM300 million under the 2022 Budget. The initiative has benefited about two million youth nationwide after it was launched in April.

Ismail Sabri announced that the first Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry smart office would open in Bera in January. --BERNAMA