



*Second Finance Minister **Datuk Johari Abdul Ghani** says the plan is for the staff to multi-task and get more talent under one roof to save costs. Pic by Abdullah Yusof*

Managing govt expenditure through streamlined operations

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KUALA LUMPUR: The government is looking at streamlining operations of government agencies operating outside Malaysia in an effort to reduce expenditure, said Second Finance Minister Datuk Johari Abdul Ghani.

He said the move was the way forward in managing expenditure.

"We would like to see if Wisma Putra can multi-task and represent agencies or ministries as a one-stop centre. We can get the staff to multi-task and get more talent under one roof to save costs.

"This is one area we can explore and discuss. But definitely it is in the pipeline," he said after the Bicara BH event titled "Bajet 2017: Siapa Un-

tung?" talk, here, yesterday.

Johari said although he did not have the exact figure, there would be a lot of savings on, among others, rental, utility and staff allowances.

There are 1.6 million civil servants in Malaysia in 28 schemes of service under the Public Service Department.

These include the federal public service, state public service, joint public service, education service, judiciary, legal service, police and armed forces.

The government is looking at ways to reduce its operating expenditure as revenue from state oil company Petroliaam Nasional Bhd and other sources grew narrower amid a sluggish global economy.

Earlier in his speech, Johari said the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M)

was designed to protect the bottom 40 per cent (B40) of the population from the impact of certain policies and changes.

"With BR1M, we want to raise the spending capacity of the B40 category and neutralise the impact of the Goods and Services Tax on them."

Johari also said it was important to understand the need to secure debts for the purpose of development.

"There is a need to develop the country in terms of better public transport, infrastructure and others.

"What is important is what we use our debts for. If the debt is for a long-term development cause, it is justified. And it is important to note our capability in debt repayments," he added.