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PUTRAJAYA, 4 April -- The B40 income group will be the first to receive the Bantuan Prihatin Nasional (BPN) payouts due to the hardships faced by the group, especially during the Movement Control Order (MCO).

Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz said the payments will be made in stages from April 6 to April 15, 2020, adding that about 8.3 million Malaysians are expected to benefit from the BPN.

"The B40 income group will be the first to receive the payout, followed by the M40 income group," he told Bernama here today.

Earlier on, Tengku Zafrul had announced that the first phase of the BPN payouts, totalling RM5.63 billion, has been brought forward to Monday, April 6 instead of end-April as originally planned.

On March 27, the government had announced the RM9.24 billion BPN under the Prihatin Rakyat Economic Stimulus Package (PRIHATIN ESP) to ensure that no parties would be left out.

The B40 households with incomes below RM4,000 will receive RM1,600 (RM1,000 in April and RM600 in May) from the government, while the M40 households with incomes between RM4,001 and RM8,000 will receive RM1,000 in cash handout (RM500 in April and RM500 in May).

Individuals who are single and earning salaries below RM2,000 will receive a total of RM800 in cash (RM500 in April and RM300 in May), while those earning between RM2,001 and RM4,000 will receive RM500 (RM250 in April and RM250 in May).

Tengku Zafrul also urged Malaysians to register for the BPN through the Inland Revenue Board's website.


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When asked on the COVID-19 pandemic's effect on the Malaysian economy, the minister said Bank Negara Malaysia has projected Malaysia's gross domestic product (GDP) growth to be at between -2 per cent to 0.5 per cent due to weak global demand, supply chain disruptions and the MCO.

"It (the projection) has taken into account the PRIHATIN ESP which is expected to add 2.8 percentage point to the GDP for 2020.

"Now we are in unprecedented territory, so we are obviously mindful of what is happening in the global economy," he said.

Tengku Zafrul also said that China's economic recovery will have a positive spillover effect on the region.

"I hope we can learn from the countries which have been successful in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

"China has been making great progress and this will help countries which have a lot of trade with China," he said, adding that he hoped the measures undertaken by the Malaysian government in handling the COVID-19 pandemic would be able to boost the country's economic potential.

-- BERNAMA

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