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We see the MCO impact on MSMEs, hence the initiatives – Tengku Zafrul

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KERAJAAN KOMITED BANTU SEKTOR PKS



ALOR SETAR, March 20 – The significant contribution by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) spurred the government to initiate various measures and assistance to rejuvenate the sector, said Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz.

He acknowledged that the sector is also the biggest contributor in employment, constituting 70 per cent of the country's workforce.

"Many of the economic stimulus packages introduced earlier such as the Prihatin Rakyat Economic Stimulus Package, KitaPrihatin and Penjana (National Economic Recovery Plan) were focused on micro and small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

"We could see the impact of the movement control order (MCO) since March last year, on the MSMEs, so we continued to assist them with allocations from the government," he said after launching the Pekan Rabu Digital Programme here today.

He further referred to the most recent initiative, Strategic Programme to Empower the People and Economy (Pemerakasa), which was also aimed at propping up SMEs.

"For Pemerakasa, the government set aside an additional RM500 million in micro-credit financing through

programmes under the relevant agencies,” he said.

On the digital programme, Tengku Zafrul said it was an initiative to encourage petty traders operating at the Pekan Rabu business complex to conduct their sales online.

“We noticed that online selling has increased sharply, particularly since March last year when the MCO was enforced. We don't want SMEs especially MSMEs to be left out of the opportunity,” he said.

The Pekan Rabu digital programme is an initiative of Telekom Malaysia Bhd (TM) whereby traders at the business complex are provided with free WiFi for one year to enable them to conduct their businesses, online.

TM Group managing director and chief executive officer Imri Mokhtar told reporters when met, that the traders were also provided with the application and training to enable them to utilise the marketing platform more effectively.

“Aside from Kompleks Pekan Rabu, we will look at other places that have a need primarily to facilitate digital business and marketing especially for MSMEs,” he said.

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