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Bantuan Prihatin Rakyat To Be Open For New Registrations By January 2021

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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 9 - The Bantuan Prihatin Rakyat (BPR) will be open for new registrations by the end of January next year.

The Finance Ministry's National Budget Office director Johan Mahmood Merican said this will enable those who are eligible but have not previously registered to apply for the upcoming cash assistance.

BPR, with an allocation of RM6.5 billion that is expected to benefit 8.1 million individuals, will replace the Bantuan Sara Hidup (BSH), which had an allocation of RM5 billion and 4.3 million beneficiaries.

When tabling Budget 2021, Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz said BPR will have higher rates of assistance.

The BSH 2020 was disbursed in three instalments.

Johan said the BPR assistance includes the reintroduction of the category for single individuals who are 21 years old, compared to 40 years old as in the last scheme.

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Under the BPR, households with a monthly income of less than RM2,500 and one child will receive assistance of RM1,200, while those with two or more children will receive RM1,800.

Households with a monthly income of between RM2,501 and RM4,000 and one child will receive assistance of RM800, while those with two or more children will receive RM1,200.

Households in the group that has a monthly income of between RM4,001 and RM5,000, with one child will receive RM500 while those with two or more children will receive RM750.

Single individuals earning RM2,500 and below and aged 21 and above will receive an assistance of RM350.

Johan said the government was also prepared to increase the allocation if applications for the assistance exceed the number of those who are eligible.

Asked to comment about claims that the M40 group was disappointed with the budget for concentrating more on the B40, he explained that it was the government's priority to help those in dire need, especially households that are living in abject poverty.

"But that does not mean the government is neglecting the M40. Besides the tax rate reduction of one percentage point for individuals with taxable income ranging from of RM50,001 to RM70,000, there are also a number of tax reliefs for the M40 such as the increase in tax relief limit for lifestyle, from RM2,500 to RM3,000.

"For those who have to bear medical costs for their parents, the tax relief has been increased from RM5,000 to RM8,000.

"With regard to tax relief for medical treatment, the scope has been expanded to cover vaccination costs of up to RM1,000. Also, the relief for health screening has been increased from RM500 to RM1,000," Johan said.

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