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Claims for frontliners, cash for BSH recipients, taxi drivers, tour guides fulfilled – Tengku Zafrul

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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 27 – The government kept up with its obligations in fulfilling the claims from COVID-19 frontliners, as well as cash payments for Bantuan Sara Hidup (BSH) recipients, taxi drivers, tour guides and tour bus drivers having disbursed about RM3 billion to them as of Aug 14 under the Prihatin Rakyat Economic Stimulus Package (Prihatin).

Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz, in the 18th LAKSANA report, said a total of RM222.4 million has been channeled to the medical frontliners in the management and containment of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the enforcement parties directly involved in implementing the Movement Control Order (MCO).

Also, under Objective 1: Protecting the Rakyat, a total of RM2.7 billion has been credited into the accounts of 4.18 million Bantuan Sara Hidup (BSH) recipients.

For those who qualify, but have yet to receive the payment, the money will be credited into their bank accounts or they can claim the aid in cash at any Bank Simpanan Nasional (BSN) branch until Dec 31, 2020.

Tengku Zafrul said the appeal for BSH 2020 is open until Sept 6 and the unsuccessful applicants could submit their appeal through the Inland Revenue Board (LHDN) branches, Revenue Service Centres (PKH), Urban Transformation Centres (UTC) or online.

No payment is needed when submitting applications or appeals, he added.

As for taxi drivers, he said, the government has channelled one-off cash assistance worth RM18.05 million to 30,089 taxi drivers, an increase from RM17.9 million, involving 29,968 taxi drivers for the first phase recipients.

For tour guides, Tengku Zafrul said a total of 7,610 of them have received one-off cash assistance amounting to RM4.57 million as of Aug 14 this year, and RM1.7 million to 2,870 tour bus drivers.

Meanwhile, under ‘Objective 2: Supporting Businesses, he said 67,413 applications have been received for the Employees Provident Fund’s (EPF)s COVID-19 Assistance Programme (e-CAP) with 12,706 applications worth RM83.23 million approved.

Also, a total of RM9 billion worth of wage subsidies has been approved, benefiting more than 2.6 million employees and out of this amount, a total of RM8.75 billion has been disbursed for the Wage Subsidy programme.

As for the BSN Micro Credit Scheme, he said, payments have been made to 9,899 small and medium enterprises (SMEs), involving a total of RM340.12 million as of Aug 14.

Payments have also been made to 24,957 SMEs under the TEKUN programme, involving a total of RM187.92 million for the same period.

For ‘Objective 3: Strengthening the Economy’, Tengku Zafrul said a total of RM1 billion has been allocated to finance the purchase of medical equipment such as ventilators and intensive care unit (ICU) equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE) for public medical service personnel as well as laboratory requirements for COVID-19 screening.

As of Aug 14, a total of RM512.5 million has been channeled in an effort to further enhance the ability of the Health Ministry to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, he added.

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