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Bernama - Govt Allocates More Than RM1.7 Bln To Fight COVID-19, Ready To Add More If Necessary: MOF

PRESS CITATIONS | 19 OCTOBER 2020



KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 19 - The government has allocated more than RM1.7 billion to fight COVID-19 transmission, channelled through 14 ministries and state governments, and remains committed in ensuring that the frontliners as well as the healthcare system have sufficient funds to protect the people.

Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz said the government remained committed to efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and was prepared to increase the allocation if necessary.

Of the amount that has been allocated so far, RM1 billion has been channelled to the Ministry of Health (MOH), RM250 million to the National Disaster Management Authority (NADMA) and RM247 million to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

"The government will not hesitate to increase the financial allocation if needed, especially to meet the needs of the frontliners," he said in a statement today.

The minister said at a time when the latest COVID-19 wave was hitting Sabah, the government, through MOH, had channeled an additional allocation of RM44 million to strengthen the state healthcare frontliners.

"This includes the addition of personal protective equipment (PPE), medical supplies and medical equipment such as patient beds as well as breathing aids or ventilators," he said.

Apart from that, he said the government, through the National Security Council (MKN), recently approved an additional allocation of RM50 million to NADMA in support of efforts to address the spread of the pandemic.

He said these additional provisions were in line with the commitment to ensure preparedness in facing the increasing number of COVID-19 infections nationwide.

On another development, Tengku Zafrul said contributions to the MOH COVID-19 Fund had been reactivated on Oct 16, 2020, at the request of various parties who wished to make cash contributions following the recent increase in infection cases.

The fund, launched on March 23, was deactivated on May 31.

“The government is deeply touched by the support of the public, including the business community, steeped in the spirit of #kitajagakita, through donations in cash, food, medical equipment and many more to address the COVID-19 pandemic,” he said.

He said the MOH COVID-19 Fund was an effort by the government to facilitate the good intentions of the people who want to contribute voluntarily.

Tengku Zafrul said the provision of this official channel also aimed to reduce the risk of the public being deceived by irresponsible parties, while ensuring that donations made would achieve its objectives.

He said overall, since February 2020, the government has received RM44.7 million in donations from various individuals, businesses and organisations.

“This fund is only for use against the COVID-19 pandemic and so far, a total of RM33.1 million has been used for the purchase of PPE and medical equipment supplied to health institutions nationwide,” he said.

Tengku Zafrul said all parties were called to work together in dealing with false statements and news and to avoid giving the wrong impression of the current situation of COVID-19 to the point of raising public concern.

“What is more important is that we focus on efforts to protect lives, ensure survival, business and the economy in the new norm,” he added.

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