

Sara recipients say aid timely amid high cost of living

KUALA LUMPUR: As living costs continue to rise, financial aid such as the Sumbangan Asas Rahmah (Sara) has become an essential support for low-income households, enabling them to manage their family's basic needs more efficiently and with less financial strain.

In NEGERI SEMBILAN, Sara recipient Zainab Baba, 70, felt great relief as she was able to manage her own needs independently, not wanting to burden her children with additional household expenses.

"Alhamdulillah, I use it to buy groceries, to top up whatever is lacking at home. Who would give us RM100 or RM150 a month? If you add it up, this aid reaches RM1,650 a year compared to RM1,200 last year," she told Bernama when met in Seremban.

The single mother of five, who now lives with her youngest child, said the assistance indirectly helped ease her child's burden, who works as a delivery rider.

The Sara programme provides additional support to recipients of the Sumbangan

Tunai Rahmah (STR) classified as poor or hardcore poor under eKasih, with the aim of improving the economic status of vulnerable groups and reinforcing the principle of equity central to the Madani Economy framework.

Starting April 1, the Sara programme was expanded to reach 5.4 million recipients, nearly eight times the previous number of 700,000.

Housewife Fazilah Ibrahim, 42, shared that the monthly aid, ranging from RM100 to RM200, has been a valuable support to her husband, who works in a factory earning between RM1,800 and RM2,000 a month.

With this assistance, she said they are able to purchase essential items for their four children, aged between two and 14.

"Alhamdulillah, we're truly grateful, with some extra money we can buy what the children need," said Fazilah, who also runs a small-scale bundle business.

Meanwhile, in KELANTAN, Hasyani Jusoh, 46, from Kampung Sri Kulim, Melor, made

full use of the aid to purchase essential kitchen items, including rice, cooking oil, and eggs.

She also used the aid to purchase school supplies for her five children, aged 10 to 19, thereby easing their dependence on her husband's income from his work as a labourer.

The Sara aid also positively impacted Mohd Zulhairi Awang Soh, 30, from Gunong, Bachok, who utilised it to purchase essential items for his nine-month-old child.

"This monthly aid really helps lessen the burden of the rising cost of daily necessities," said Mohd Zulhairi, who works as a labourer, while his wife Zura Mat Ali, 29, is a housewife.

From January to March this year, Sara assistance of RM100 per month was credited to recipients' MyKad. Starting from April 1, the amount was increased to RM200 per month for the purchase of food, beverages, medicine, school items, and personal hygiene items at over 1,600 registered shops and supermarkets nationwide.