

## **41,490 hardcore poor in Sabah**

KOTA KINABALU: The overall poverty statistics in Sabah shows there are 86,766 people comprising the hardcore poor, poor and economically marginalised in the state as of Dec 1.

State Rural Development minister Datuk Jahid Jahim said from this figure, there were 41,490 hardcore poor, 24,864 poor, while the total number of dropouts was 20,412 people.

He added the information was based on a new methodology to determine the poverty line income (PGK) to better reflect the consumption pattern, current needs and demographics of households.

He said the PGK calculation methodology was last updated in 2005 and the PGK in 2016 was RM980 per month for one household.

The study was conducted by the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department in collaboration with the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), Health Ministry and several related ministries and agencies from March 2019 to June 2020.

"As a result of the review, the methodology of setting the PGK has been improved in three aspects, namely the concept of setting food PGK, which has been improved from 'minimum' to 'optimum minimum' by taking into account the quality improvement of food basket items based on the 2020 Food Pyramid and 2020 Malaysian Diet Guide food group (PDM) in line with daily physical activities and healthy living.

"Secondly, for no-food PGK, the needs of the lowest 20 per cent income group (B20) identified increased from 106 to 146 items.

"This means, 40 items that were previously not considered basic requirements to the B20 group, have now been included in the list.

"Thirdly, the change in household spending patterns, current prices of goods and services in 2019 compared to 2005," he said at the State Legislative Assembly here today.

He was answering a question from Datuk Ewon Benedick (Upko- Kadamaian) on the latest methodology to determine PGK and the latest poverty statistics in Sabah.

Meanwhile, during the debate session, Ben Chong (Warisan-Tanjong Kapor) urged the government to focus on downstream industries to elevate the standard of living among rural folks including at the eight poorest districts - Pitas, Kudat, Kota Belud, Beluran, Tongod, Nabawan, Telupid and Kota Marudu.

As a Kudat native, Chong said he felt ashamed that it was difficult for the district to come out from the dilemma of being labelled the poorest district in Malaysia since 10 years ago.

"Those of us in Kudat feel very sad because we only received the allocation to upgrade the Kudat Town Board Office Building while there are many infrastructure in the villages that need attention from the government."

Chong also suggested for the state government to bring in investment for the construction of the Kudat port to boost the local economy.

<https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2021/12/752144/41490-hardcore-poor-sabah>