

Tok Pa: Statistical data helps Putrajaya ensure that no Malaysian goes hungry

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 20 — After dealing with the health and economic consequences of Covid-19 since its outbreak, the government has learnt that statistics can help ensure that food remains on every Malaysian's table, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed.

He said what the government had learnt from dealing with the pandemic is that, there is a need to compile and disseminate granular and real-time statistics.

"For example, in providing help to the people, we need a much more robust data mechanism tracking micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and people living under the poverty line.

"Statistics can help us ensure that food remains on every Malaysian's table," he said when delivering his opening remarks virtually at the 8th Malaysia Statistics Conference (8th MyStats) 2021 here, today.

Mustapa said the pandemic had also enhanced the importance of statistics, as people wanted to have the latest information on unemployment and inflation, on a monthly, if not weekly basis.

"Statistics as they say, do not lie," he said.

To meet the people's expectations, he said there is a need for the rapid and transparent dissemination of granular data to the public.

Touching on the 2020 Malaysian Population and Housing Census (Census 2020), Mustapa said as at Oct 14, 2021, 90 per cent of the population have been covered in the census, and the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM) remains committed to completing it by end of this month.

The Census 2020 was supposed to be completed by Oct 24, 2020 but had to be postponed inevitably due to the pandemic, he added.

In terms of DoSM's publications, Mustapa said none of the department's publications were affected despite the movement control orders (MCOs) and the government's standard operating procedures (SOPs) were imposed since last year.

"Indeed, all 519 publications in 2020 and 269 publications in 2021 (as at Sept 30) were released on time," he said.

Meanwhile, chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin said the DoSM managed to release very useful information to the public almost every day despite several MCOs were implemented since the pandemic outbreak.

“Among them are the Malaysian Economic Statistics Review (MESR) report, which has now entered its eight series containing 322 economic indicators,” he said when delivering his virtual welcoming remarks.

Mohd Uzir said besides, 61 DoSM Intelligence MCO Impact Case Study reports in several sectors, such as services, construction and manufacturing were provided to the National Economic Action Council (NEAC) to assist them in formulating national policies.

Mohd Uzir said over the years, the DoSM had relentlessly supplied economic and social statistics to the government for the purpose of national policy formulation.

“The DoSM will continue to excel with the dissemination of socioeconomic statistics of the smallest geographical level with the publication of Mylocal Stats,” he added.

Themed “Navigating Resilient Recovery Through Statistics”, the 8th MyStats is held simultaneously with the World Statistics Day Celebration.

Mohd Uzir said this year’s theme coincides with the world situation today which is in the recovery phase through the use of statistical solutions as the main platform.

The DoSM, in a statement, said MyStats Day aims to increase the awareness and understanding in the statistical community regarding the importance of statistics to the development, as well as the well-being of the people who need correct decisions based on comprehensive and sufficient evidence and facts.

“With the availability of accurate statistics, the channeling of national resources for planning and development can be implemented efficiently and effectively in ensuring that no one is left behind,” it said. — Bernama

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