

RM599 million aid channelled to senior citizens up to August

SEPANG: The Women, Family and Community Development Ministry (KPWKM) has channelled RM559 million in aid to 138,000 senior citizens for the first eight months of this year, its minister Datuk Seri Rina Mohd Harun said.

She said for this year, the government had allocated RM880 million under the Senior Citizens Assistance scheme to be distributed to those who are registered under the Welfare Department, adding that each recipient will receive RM500 a month.

"This (senior citizens aid scheme) is actually monthly cash aid and only given to senior citizens who meet criteria like those living alone and unable to work for survival," she said after visiting the Yayasan Al-Jenderami Complex here today.

Rina said it is also for senior citizens who are aged 60 and above with a household income not exceeding the poverty line for households.

She said her ministry will continue to improve the quality of care, protection and support to enable senior citizens to be part of a healthy, active and productive society.

"These efforts include the introduction of laws to protect the rights of senior citizens, creating a comprehensive long-term framework to improve the quality and care for senior citizens as well as enhancing the social care industry.

"Awareness campaigns about having healthy old age lives will be intensified, while senior citizen care will be made a professional career," she said.

She said the ministry was now conducting talks with various parties and stakeholders to introduce the Senior Citizens Act as preparation towards being an ageing nation.

"This is a new act and is still in an early discussion stage where we hope by the year 2030, there are laws to assist senior citizens in terms of jobs, flexible hours, the establishment of senior citizen-friendly townships and so on.

"Based on projected data by the Statistics Department, the country is expected to be an ageing nation in 2030 in which 15.3 per cent of the country's population will be 60 years old and above.

"At that time, the number of senior citizens in the country will reach 5.8 million from a total population of 38.1 million," she said.

In the meantime, Rina said her ministry would soon be launching the e-Senior Citizens System that acts as a national integrated database for senior citizens. - Bernama

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