

## **Over half a million M40 households are now B40, says PM**

KUALA LUMPUR: Over half a million middle-income group (M40) households have slipped into the bottom 40 per cent (B40) category due to the current health and economic crises caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said 580,000 M40 households are now categorised as B40 and this, he said, represents approximately 20 per cent of the middle-income group.

According to him, this group had initially received a monthly income of between RM4,850 and RM10,959 but since the pandemic began last year, the absolute poverty figure in Malaysia rose to 8.4 per cent in 2020.

This is a big increase from 5.6 per cent in 2019.

"This is based on the data provided by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), which is still applied to the current Poverty Line Income (PLI), which is set at RM2,208 per month.

"The government has conducted a socio-economic impact study following the pandemic.

"Based on the report's estimate of household income and incidence of poverty, which was conducted by the Department of Statistics, as much as 20 per cent or about 580,000 households from M40 group have shifted to the income limit below the B40 group," he said today.

Ismail said this in a written parliamentary reply in response to questions by S. Kesavan (PH-Sungai Siput) and Natrah Ismail (PH-Sekijang) who asked if the government planned to revise the PLI threshold to reflect the current situation.

Ismail Sabri said the government would revise the PLI threshold together with the Household Income and Basic Amenities Survey in 2022.

He also pointed out that the rising unemployment rate had contributed to the reduction of income for those in the M40 and B40 groups.

<https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2021/09/729370/over-half-million-m40-households-are-now-b40-says-pm>