

Research on Sarawak's preparation for ageing society set to commence in 2023

KUCHING (Sept 26): The research on Sarawak's preparation for an ageing society is expected to be carried out next year, says Minister of Women, Childhood and Community Wellbeing Development Dato Sri Fatimah Abdullah.

According to her, the project has been given a time frame of one year to be completed.

"But before we could conduct the study, we would need to present it to the Sarawak Development Executive Committee (SDEC) and then to the State Cabinet.

"We would need endorsement from the Cabinet on what's being carried out as well as the financial implication for the research," she told a press conference after chairing a meeting on the research at her office here today.

Fatimah pointed out that the proposed research would be a 'massive, intensive and extensive' study, with the objective of guiding the development of a structured master plan meant to support 'a healthy and dignified ageing society in Sarawak'.

"My ministry is aware of the difficulties and the potential impacts of an ageing population.

"The latest statistics by the **Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM)** in 2020 showed that Sarawak would be an ageing state by 2028.

"Though studies (on ageing population) have been carried out in Malaysia, what we want is a very intensive study done in Sarawak itself because we know that in terms of demography, Sarawak is very different compared to other states in the country."

Fatimah said the research would involve three universities: Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus in Kuching would gather data for the southern region, while Curtin University Malaysia in Miri and University of Technology Sarawak in Sibu would do the same for the northern and central regions, respectively.

"The study will be conducted to map the profiles of the elderly population in Sarawak; to identify ageing issues and challenges affecting the elderly folks in Sarawak; to assess the effectiveness and outcome of existing intervention and programmes for the elderly people in Sarawak; and to recommend strategies and action plans to address ageing issues in Sarawak," she said.

The minister also said the research scope would cover several elements such as financial security or social protection; household expenditure; health and wellbeing including health-seeking behaviour; housing and transportation; lifelong learning or consumer education; family care and support, intergenerational relationship; and geographical distribution of elderly people as well as their socio-economic, living arrangements and health profile.

"The outcome of the study will see the recommendation of targeted, evidence-based, effective and sustainable intervention and programmes to address ageing issues, including healthy, active, productive and positive ageing, affecting the elderly people in Sarawak.

“It will also include comprehensive recommendations for an elderly policy for Sarawak and a systematic and structured Ageing Nation Action Plan 2023-2030 for Sarawak covering short, medium and long term plans,” said Fatimah.

<https://www.theborneopost.com/2022/09/26/research-on-sarawaks-preparation-for-ageing-society-set-to-commence-in-2023/>