

Poverty line income to be updated

KUALA LUMPUR: The poverty line (PGK) income will be updated based on the findings of the Household Income, Expenditure and Basic Amenities Survey (HIES/BA) 2022, says Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy), Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed.

The survey is being carried out by the **Statistics Department (DOSM)** and its findings are expected to be published in March next year.

It is aimed at studying and providing information on household income and expenditure patterns as well as poverty statistics, especially poverty rates up to the administrative district level.

The survey was launched early this year and will be conducted for a year involving 92,000 selected households.

"It will take into account income, expenditure, demand patterns and prices of goods and services including the impact of the increase in the cost of living," he said at the Dewan Negara sitting yesterday.

He was responding to a question from Senator Datuk Koh Nai Kwong, who wanted to know the government's plan to recalculate the value of PGK by taking into account people's income, savings, education, health and other dimensions after the country's transition into the endemic phase.

Mustapa said the Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU) of the Prime Minister's Department also collects poverty data based on the eKasih system, adding that as of July 31, 136,923 households are in the extreme poor category, while 308,699 households are categorised as poor.

"ICU collects this data in collaboration with district and state government offices. Data clean-up is being carried out from time to time," he said.

Meanwhile, he said the PGK has increased to RM2,208 per month in 2019, in contrast to RM980 per month in 2016.

The household income for the extreme poor stood at RM1,169 per month in 2019, he said, adding that the absolute poverty rate was 5.6% and the extreme poor was 0.4% in 2019.

"The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have caused the rates of absolute poverty and extreme poverty to increase to 8.4% and 1%, respectively in 2020," he said.

The country's relative poverty rate stood at 16.2% in 2020, he added.

Elaborating, he said relative poverty measures the number of households earning below 50% of the median income of RM5,209 per month.

The government also measures poverty using the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) to include other dimensions such as education, health, living standards and income, he said. — Bernama

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