

BE2026 expands coverage for more inclusive economic data

PUTRAJAYA:

The implementation of the Economic Census 2026 (BE2026) will, for the first time, expand its coverage to include the informal sector, which is increasingly important in Malaysia's economic ecosystem.

This includes online businesses, small traders, homestays, gig workers, and non-profit organisations.

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), this move is in line with the principle of "no business left behind" to ensure that national economic statistics are more inclusive and accurately reflect the real economic activities of the people.

"This approach is expected to help the government better understand the role of micro and community economies, and subsequently formulate more precise and effective economic empowerment policies," it said in a statement shortly after the launch of BE2026, officiated by Economy Minister Akmal Nasrullah Mohd Nasir.

DOSM said BE2026 will also adopt the Malaysia Standard Industrial Classification (MSIC) 2025, which is aligned with the latest International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) standards.

This step enables modern economic activities such as robotics, data centres, renewable energy, digital assets, the creative economy, and digital services to be classified more accurately and in line with global economic structural developments.

Its implementation also takes into account the principles under the System of National Accounts 2025 (2025 SNA), which emphasises the digital economy, globalisation, intellectual property, environmental sustainability, and public wellbeing beyond merely measuring gross domestic product (GDP), thereby strengthening Malaysia's ability to assess overall economic



Mohd Uzir says the implementation of BE2026 is a crucial foundation in strengthening the country's economic data system. — Bernama photo

progress comprehensively.

"In line with the public sector digitalisation agenda, BE2026 will also leverage the use of the e-Mikro system, simplified digital forms, a census communication portal, and the online e-Economic Census platform to ensure that the census process is more efficient, faster, and user-friendly.

"BE2026 is also aligned with various national development policies, including the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP), the Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint, the New Industrial Master Plan 2030, the National Economic Transition Roadmap, and the National Entrepreneurship Policy.

"The comprehensive data collected will serve as key input for the formulation of fiscal, monetary, social, and development policies," DOSM said, adding that statistics generated through the census are expected to boost the confidence of domestic and international investors, while supporting

Malaysia in crafting resilient and sustainable long-term economic strategies.

Economy Minister Mohd Shahar Abdullah, Ministry of Economy Secretary-General Nor Azmie Diron, and chief statistician Mohd Uzir Mahidin also attended the ceremony.

Also present were several members of parliament, including Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

Mohd Uzir said the implementation of BE2026 is a crucial foundation in strengthening the country's economic data system, especially as the global economy faces significant changes driven by digital technology, artificial intelligence, automation, demographic shifts, and geopolitical uncertainties.

He noted that BE2026 covers five main economic sectors — agriculture; mining and quarrying; manufacturing; construction; and services — involving more than 1.34 million active establishments

nationwide.

"At the initial phase, 416,942 micro establishments have been successfully enumerated. The distribution of establishments shows that the services sector continues to dominate the economic structure at 83.6 per cent, followed by construction (8.7 per cent), manufacturing (5.5 per cent), agriculture (1.9 per cent), and mining and quarrying (0.2 per cent).

"Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, and Johor account for nearly half of the total economic establishments in the country, reflecting the concentration of economic activities in densely populated and highly competitive areas," he said.

Mohd Uzir also called on all business establishments, institutions, government agencies, industries, and the public to cooperate in ensuring the success of BE2026, assuring that all information is fully protected under the Statistics Act 1965 (Revised 1989). — Bernama