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Muhyiddin: eKasih system needs upgrade

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PUTRAJAYA: The eKasih database needs to be upgraded to ensure the national poverty databank system can facilitate the distribution of aid and assistance from the government to the needy, said National Recovery Council chairman Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said eKasih was not quick and coordinated enough in disbursing aid.

Muhyiddin said the government could emulate the system in Australia to improve eKasih.

"In Australia, the system [that distributes assistance] will be automatically triggered [alerted] to provide aid once people fall below the poverty line or lose their job.

"This is because the system [in Australia] is such that people who need aid will receive the aid disbursed immediately to them."

This was unlike the eKasih system, which was created in 2007, he added.

"If information about people who require assistance from the government does not reach any department, it will take more than a year for them to get help and aid from the government."

"That is why we need to restructure and revamp eKasih."

Earlier in his speech at the National Recovery and Social Inclusion seminar, he said the council had proposed an integrated system for the distribution of aid to the people.

"Although almost all government ministries and agencies are providing aid to people, there are people or groups who are left out.

"At the same time, there are people who receive assistance and aid from more than one ministry or agency.

"By having an integrated system, we can coordinate the distribution of aid in a transparent and effective manner as well as reach out to more recipients."

He said the integrated system could work as a social safety network mechanism.

As people were recovering from the economic impact brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, with more households in the M40 segment falling into poverty, he said there was a need for an immediate and serious intervention as well as comprehensive measures to be carried out.

"According to eKasih data, around 600,000 households in the M40 cat-



National Recovery Council chairman Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (right) at the National Recovery and Social Inclusion seminar in Putrajaya yesterday. PIC COURTESY OF NATIONAL RECOVERY COUNCIL

egory have fallen below the poverty line or contributed to the increase of people in the B40 category."

On the seminar, he said he hoped the event could produce ideas to strengthen the economy.

Muhyiddin said: "Today's seminar is relevant, especially at a time when the country's economic landscape is challenging."

"It will provide a platform for aca-

demicians, industry players, policy makers and civil society to gather input related to the country's economic recovery.

"Apart from serving as a medium for stakeholders to deliberate on issues and challenges in the country's socio-economy, the seminar could also empower the national economic agenda for a more inclusive and sustainable economy."

Twelve panellists who conducted research under Masa Policy Development Programme tabled their working papers.

Among them were economist Datuk Dr Madeline Berma, an honorary professor at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas), and Universiti Teknologi Mara's Sabah campus deputy rector (academic affairs) Dr Firdausi Suffian.