

KERATAN AKHBAR

TARIKH : 18 OKTOBER 2022

AKHBAR : THE EDGE MARKETS

MUKA SURAT : <https://www.theedgemarkets.com/article/malaysia-down-130000-hardcore-poor-families-endseptember-says-mustapa>

Malaysia down to 130,000 hardcore poor families as at end-September, says Mustapa



KUALA LUMPUR (Oct 18): The number of hardcore poor has been reduced to 129,395 households as of Sept 30, 2022, down from 260,000 recorded as at end-October last year.

This represents a 50.23% reduction, as about 130,605 households have been removed from the hardcore poor category within almost one year.

Caretaker Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed attributed this to the country's gradual economic recovery, following the successful roll-out of the national immunisation programme, along with the introduction of eight stimulus packages by the Government.

The household income level for those considered to be hardcore poor is RM1,169 a month or less.

Mustapa reiterated that the Government's goal is to eradicate hardcore poverty by 2025, as set in the 12th Malaysia Plan.

According to him, there is a positive relationship between economic growth and poverty reduction.

"Economic growth could help to increase business and job opportunities, which will also help to reduce [the number of] hardcore poor families. We need to ensure the country's economy is in solid shape and can sustain a good growth rate," he said at a press conference, after officiating at the conference entitled "International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP) 2022", with the theme of "Building Sustainable Communities".

To achieve zero hardcore poverty by 2025, the Government has set up a Keluarga Malaysia (Malaysian Family) hardcore poverty eradication programme pilot project (BMTKM). The programme is spearheaded by the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) and the Implementation Coordination Unit under the Prime Minister's Department.

Under BMTKM, Mustapa said the usual "one size fits all" solution will be replaced in favour of finding tailor-fit solutions for each locality. Among the common features of BMTKM include income generation, capacity building, entrepreneurial development, and career opportunities.

"The successful implementation of this programme relies upon close collaboration with the state government, district office, and our strategic partners. As the minister in charge of the EPU, I have also started the Poverty Circle, which is a round-table discussion that brings together key stakeholders to discuss ways to eradicate poverty," he added.

He also stressed that the convergence of information and resources is important in ensuring an optimum impact in improving quality of life and eradicating poverty.

The conference was held in an effort to raise awareness and tackle poverty issues. It is organised by Yayasan Sejahtera, in partnership with the EPU, United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank Group, and supported by Yayasan Hasanah.

Yayasan Sejahtera is a non-profit organisation working actively on poverty eradication and community development for low-income and vulnerable households in Malaysia.

Yayasan Hasanah, meanwhile, is a grant-giving organisation set up by Khazanah Nasional Bhd, the country's sovereign wealth fund.

Yayasan Sejahtera chairman Tan Sri Faizah Mohd Tahir said that there has been an increase in the poverty rate, including in Malaysia, following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Today, we may find it harder to be hopeful about the future as things remain uncertain. Nonetheless, we all must pull through and do so together. Covid-19 won’t be the last crisis of our lifespan, and we need to learn and improve by building sustainable communities,” she said.

“We will focus on alleviating poverty in the post-pandemic phase that complements Agenda 2030 and the Keluarga Malaysia mission. We need new and effective approaches that could help us ensure better preparedness for other unexpected future events, and strengthen resilience against future shocks post Covid-19.

“I sincerely hope that IDEP will be the platform for us to bring forth ideas and solutions for communities that will come out stronger, secured in their livelihoods, resilient and indeed achieve a stronger social justice,” she concluded.