

KERATAN AKHBAR

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PUTRAJAYA: The government has set up a RM500mil fund to kickstart the People's Facilities Initiative (IKR) to enable the public and government agencies to apply for funds to acquire, fix or maintain public amenities, says Rafizi Ramli.

The Economy Minister said the applications, which will be vetted by a committee within his ministry, will have a cap of RM200,000 per project.

"They must involve public facilities or amenities. If every effort

has been made to buy it or fix it, but the issue remains unattended to, then the public can apply on a website and it must be a project that can be completed within two or three months, not a long-term one.

"The allocation, once approved, will be handed over to the agency in charge of the project, such as the local authorities.

"This way, small contractors too can be assisted," he said at the launch of the fund yesterday after hosting a town hall on the 12th Malaysia Plan here to get feedback from the public on the needs of the Federal Territories of

Putrajaya, Kuala Lumpur and Labuan.

Noting that local authorities and government agencies have limited budgets to take on all projects, Rafizi said this fund will assist them by being an additional means for allocations.

He added that the management of the fund will be more transparent than the approval of allocations under the ministry for such projects.

Prior to this, he, as the minister, had to approve such projects, but now they will be vetted and approved by a committee, Rafizi said.

"When people ask, it will be approved according to the terms and conditions. Then it will go through the usual process via a particular agency.

"At our level, it will be fully transparent, and we will also present it at Parliament.

"I will not be involved in the process of approval. And the bureaucratic process will be shortened," added Rafizi.

The launch follows his recent announcement that the public will be able to apply for small allocations from the government to fix potholes.

Earlier at the town hall, resi-

dents of the Federal Territories proposed that the government ensure that local small businesses and hawkers are protected as there is an influx of foreign migrants running small businesses in their vicinity using licences of Malaysians.

Rafizi said this is due to the "Ali Baba" method of running a business. He added laws are being drafted to curb the practice, which is not an offence at present.

The public can send in their applications for projects acquiring or fixing public amenities at www.ikr.ekonomi.gov.my.