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## RAFIZI: B40, B60 in 4,752 areas not covered by aid schemes

PLEA TO NON-MALAYS

# RAFIZI: B40, B60 IN 4,752 AREAS NOT COVERED BY AID SCHEMES

Vulnerable groups with majority in Klang Valley at risk of being passed over for not being on database

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**A**ROUND 4,752 areas in Malaysia have individuals who are neither registered under the Central Database Hub (Padu) nor have been part of any government assistance programme, Economy Minister Rafizi Ramli said.

"The inhabitants of these areas, although identified from among the Bottom 40 and Bottom 60 groups, have no data in any previous government aid data," he said yesterday.

Rafizi highlighted that the majority of the vulnerable areas were concentrated in the Klang Valley, with Selangor topping the list at 1,282 localities, followed by Kuala Lumpur at 992, Sarawak (765), Sabah (620), Johor (271), Penang (243), Kelantan (228), and Kedah (157).

Conversely, Pahang registered 70 localities, Perak with 67, Terengganu with 35, Negeri Sembilan with eight, Perlis with seven, Putrajaya with five and Melaka with two.

Rafizi said residents in the localities were at risk of being passed over from receiving or being involved in any programme or future government assistance.

In the context of Padu implementation, updates by the people or individual administrative records were visualised up to the locality level.

Locality refers to the residence of a group of locals who have clear social lines, such as villages or housing estates. Examples of localities are People's Housing Projects and condominiums.

Rafizi said identifying areas at risk of being overlooked to prevent any loss of government aid was the priority.

"My primary concern is identifying areas prone to omission, which is why we segment by geo-location and target those in B40 and Middle 40 categories, who haven't received previous government assistance."

Rafizi said areas with a higher non-Malay population were at a greater risk of being overlooked for assistance.

Places like Seputeh, Segambut, and Bukit Bintang, where many residents were non-Malays, faced this issue, he added.

"My plea to all non-Malay friends is that we have two weeks. I understand that even within our constituencies, non-Malay residents often are not aware of the assistance or programmes available to them."

He said now would be the chance to be part of the government's overall planning for programmes.

The idea of Padu is to identify households in need. A town hall session will be held on March 23 at the MBSA Convention Centre, which aims to shed light on the benefits of Padu as well as getting cooperation from related parties to help increase enrolment among the people, especially in Selangor and Federal Territory areas before March 31. Up to yesterday, 5.43 million individuals have updated their Padu data.

Rafizi said: "If you don't register and

update your data in Padu, the government will use existing data from government departments, which we believe is sufficient. However, it is important for as many Malaysians as possible to update their data to ensure accuracy."

Rafizi refuted claims by an online portal that several Padu service counters were closed in the final stretch of registrations. He said, in fact, more counters had been opened in the final two weeks before the March 31 deadline.

While the primary method of registration is through the Padu website, the government had set up counters to assist individuals who face difficulties in completing the online registration process.

Rafizi clarified that the Padu team, including the Department of Statistics Malaysia, was more focused on opening counters in 4,752 targeted locations at risk of being passed over rather than waiting for the public to come to the counters or government offices themselves.

"What happened was they went to the website, looked at the schedule, and it said 'closed'. We have limited staff,

so it's more efficient to deploy them where they're needed. From January to February, the team received many requests from residents' associations, representatives and non-governmental organisations for the Padu team and DoSM to open counters in their areas. So, it is more efficient for us to deploy limited manpower to these targeted localities."

The claim that counters were closed, was untrue, said Rafizi.

He said the counters were operating as usual.



Rafizi Ramli