

RM500 for civil servants, RM250 for pensioners

RAYA BOON: Groups to receive Ramadan, Raya assistance next week, says Najib

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DATUK Seri Najib Razak yesterday announced a RM500 special allowance for civil servants below Grade 54 to help with preparations for the fasting month and Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

More than 700,000 pensioners, meanwhile, would get RM250.

Najib said the two groups would receive the one-off special assistance, which totalled RMI billion, on June 25.

He made the announcement at the 14th Civil Service Premier Gathering at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC).

The assistance aimed to reduce the financial burdens of civil servants celebrating Ramadan and Hari Raya, he said to rapturous applause by the 5,000-strong crowd of civil servants who packed PICC's Plenary Hall.

Present were Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin,

Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Ali Hamsa and Public Service Department director-general Tan Sri Mohamad Zabidi Zainal.

Najib, who is also finance minister, also announced an increase in minimum housing incentives for civil servants from RM180 to RM300 effective Nov 1.

Those occupying government quarters, he said, would receive 25 per cent of the housing incentives according to their respective entitlement.

Najib said this move involved 1.1 million civil servants at the cost of RM1.04 billion annually.

Najib also praised members of the civil service and mountain guides who were part of relief efforts after an earthquake struck Ranau and Mount Kinabalu in Sabah, where 18 people died.

"The government has agreed to provide any form of assistance and appreciation to all those involved, as they are truly the unsung heroes," he said.

On another matter, Najib said ministries and departments would



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak greeting the public at the launch of e-Rezeki at PPR Desa Rejang in Setapak, Kuala Lumpur, yesterday. Pic by Abdullah Yusof

be rewarded with a portion of their savings from annual budget allocations that were returned to the Treasury.

He said a new approach was needed so that all departments and ministries would adopt a more thrifty approach to expenditure.

"According to current traditions, we look at the budget approved, where the ministries that finished the allocation fully, were considered to be good. Why don't we set a new challenge for ourselves whereby we achieve our objectives and KPIs, and reduce spending at the same time?"

Najib cited the Education Ministry's achievement in saving RM1 billion from its allocation recently as an example.

He said he had instructed Ali and Zabidi to come up with formulas to reward government bodies that saved on costs.

Later in **Kuala Lumpur**, Najib launched e-Rezeki, a transformation plan for the lower income group under the 11th Malaysia Plan.

The Internet-based crowd sourcing programme is aimed at the B40 group, or lowest income group, who make up 40 per cent of the

nation's citizens, with the goal of doubling their average income from RM2,500 per month to RM5,000 by 2020.

"The aim is for the wealth of the country to be shared, not just by the one per cent of the wealthiest in our population, but for it to be all-inclusive."

E-Rezeki, a platform where jobs can be sourced and fulfilled online, is operated via five centres at Urban or Rural Transformation Centres around the country, which Najib said would be expanded at a later date. **Additional reporting by Arnaz M. Khairul**