LEMBAGA Tabung Haji (TH) will announce the hibah distribution for 2018 in the near future, after the pilgrim fund completed multi-billion asset sales to balance its financials.

"The dividend for TH depositors will be announced soon," said Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Yusof Rawa in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Earlier this year, TH group MD and CEO Datuk Seri Zukri Samat said the pilgrim fund can pay hibah to its depositors for 2018 after balancing its financials.

Zukri said TH’s balance sheet has been restored, which would enable the fund to distribute hibah to its depositors.

Ribah refers to a gift based on Islamic principles used in the distribution of wealth.

According to the Tabung Haji Act 1995, the fund can only pay hibah to its depositors in a particular year if its assets are more than its liabilities.

Under the TH recovery plan, the Finance Ministry set up a special-purpose vehicle (SPV), Utusharta Jamaah Sdn Bhd, which paid RM18.9 billion to take over the pilgrim fund’s underperforming properties and equities.

The value of the assets and equities as at the end of last year was almost RM10 billion.

The SPV issued a RM10 billion securitisation sukuk and RM9.9 billion in Islamic redeemable convertible preference shares to undertake the purchase of the assets. In January, TH announced that it had completed the transfer of all its underperforming equities and assets.

TH reported liabilities of RM54.4 billion against total assets of RM79.3 billion, resulting in a total deficit of RM14.1 billion as at Dec 31, 2017. The gap would be bigger at the end of 2018, preventing the fund from distributing any returns to depositors.

Among the companies involved in the transfer of shares were UEM Sunrise Bhd, Boustead Heavy Industries Corp Bhd, Alam Maritim Resources Bhd, MaHng Group Bhd, FGV Holdings Bhd, Bramah’s Holdings Bhd, Puncak Niaga Holdings Bhd, Parkson Holdings Bhd, White Horse Bhd, MCT Bhd, MMC Corp Bhd, Suria Capital Holdings Bhd, and Malaysia Marine and Heavy Engineering Holdings Bhd.

TH still holds substantial shares in key stocks such as Tenaga Nasional Bhd, Ramuill Holdings Bhd, Maxis Bhd and BIMB Holdings Bhd.

According to Zukri, TH’s balance sheet has been restored.

— by SHAHEERA AZNAM SHAH