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PM CHECKS PREPARATIONS FOR 420,000 FOOD BASKETS

PUTRAJAYA

TAN Sri Muhyiddin Yassin yesterday inspected preparations for the Bakul Prihatin Negara programme, which involves the distribution of 420,000 staple food baskets to 1.68 million people who are short of food because of the economic disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

With a "whole of society" concept involving cooperation between the public and private sectors, the programme is managed by Yayasan Kebajikan Negara under the purview of the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry.

Speaking after visiting the programme's collection and distribution centre at Dewan Perdana Nur at the ministry's headquarters here yesterday, the prime minister said preparation of the food baskets involved an allocation of RM5 million from the Prime Minister's Department and RM16 million from

the private sector.

"We cannot compromise on people's wellbeing. As long as the Covid-19 crisis is not over and the economy is not revived, I will remain concerned and feel responsible to ensure the wellbeing of the people in the country regardless of their background or where they are.

"We shall do our best to help them."

Also present were Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Rina Mohd Harun and her deputy, Datuk Siti Zailah Mohd Yusoff.

The distribution of food baskets was carried out by the Prihatin Negara Squad volunteers managed by the Social Welfare Department.

Each basket contained staples worth RM50, including rice, salt, sugar, flour, vermicelli, soy sauce, canned sardines, biscuits and coffee.

Muhyiddin said apart from the Bakul Prihatin Negara programme, the government had distributed 2.36 million food baskets, involv-



Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, accompanied by Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Rina Mohd Harun (second from left) looking at the basic necessities that will be packaged in the food baskets for the poor. With them is Deputy Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Siti Zailah Mohd Yusoff (second from right). BERNAMA PIC

ing an allocation of RM173.4 million, which had benefited 9.26 million people since the first phase of the assistance programme that was launched in March last year.

"Most of the target groups, be it from the M40, B40 or the T20 households, were affected by the pandemic

as they may have lost their jobs or cannot run their businesses, so we give them aid," he said.

Malaysians in need of food can apply for the food baskets by contacting Talian Kasih at 15999, the nearest social welfare office or by referring to the information avail-

able on the ministry's social media platforms.

During the visit, Muhyiddin also received contributions totalling RM16 million from five companies.

The companies are Yayasan Petronas, represented by Petronas Group president and chief executive officer (CEO) Tengku Muhammad Taufik Tengku Aziz, with a contribution of RM5 million; AEON Big, represented by AEON Group Malaysia CEO Shafie Shamsuddin (RM4 million); Pharmaniaga Bhd, represented by its chairman Datuk Seri Mohammed Shazaili Ramly (RM3 million); Tenaga Nasional Bhd, represented by its president and CEO Datuk Baharin Din (RM2 million); and Telekom Malaysia Bhd, represented by its chairman Tan Sri Mohd Bakke Salleh (RM2 million).

Muhyiddin also presented the Prihatin Negara Squad vests to two volunteers — Ahmad Azri Ahmad, 35, and Azalina Abdul Rahman, 44. **Bernama**