

PM to issue economic aid soon



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Putrajaya is still in the process of studying measures to be introduced to help the survival of the people and businesses

by NUR HANANI AZMAN / Pic by BERNAMA

PRIME Minister (PM) Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin is expected to make an announcement on economic assistance soon, said Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar.

"For a bigger economic assistance package, that's coming soon," he said during a virtual engagement session with the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (NCCIM) yesterday.

Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz said that the government is **fine-tuning the financial aid** in line with the recently announced **National Recovery Plan**.

Putrajaya is still in the process of studying measures to be introduced to help the **survival of the people and businesses** in facing the economic challenges for the upcoming months.

However, in the meantime, the existing assistance such as the recently-introduced Pemerkasa Plus package will be available to the people, Tengku Zafrul said in the Implementation and Coordination Unit Between National Agencies (Laksana) report yesterday.

Meanwhile, Khairy said e-hailing drivers and delivery riders will be vaccinated starting July.



“We will be getting around e-hailing drivers and food delivery drivers in July, we will be starting to vaccinate our friends who are in Grab, foodpanda and all the couriers in July,” he said, adding that he will be launching the vaccination programme for the transportation sector at Port Klang today. Khairy noted that he has received a lot of different applications for different sectors to be considered as frontliners.

“Of course, the constraint was supply. So we are going to start with the transportation sector. We also hope to get 600,000 doses for the industrial programme in July,” he added.

The Malaysian Reserve previously reported that Malaysian Employers Federation was urging on vaccination programmes for the manufacturing sector to be expedited as the high infectivity rate among its factory workers is inevitable due to the continual operation of essential industries.

Khairy stressed that the third quarter of 2021 (3Q21) will be crucial for the vaccination drive.

He said the country will be in a good place to start transitioning towards the third phase of the recovery plan by the end of 3Q21.

“I believe that we can start thinking about opening borders once countries are also confident in our management of Covid-19. Singapore for instance, I have already started discussions in terms of recognition of MySejahtera apps so that we can have joint recognition of our vaccination passports. Now is the matter of Singapore being confident to open borders with us.

“We are having an accelerated vaccination exercise for Langkawi because we want to open up Langkawi as a pilot programme for a green bubble for tourists like what has been done in Bali, Indonesia, and Phuket, Thailand. So, (when) that’s successful, then we can start opening up to fully vaccinated tourists. They can fly to Langkawi. They cannot come to the mainland, but they can do whatever they want there and go back,” he added.

Meanwhile, NCCIM president Tan Sri Ter Leong Yap said in the next six months, the business community is looking for better clarity, certainty and assurance so that businesses can plan ahead.

He said the NRP, which outlines four phases of the Covid-19 reopening framework, must be well executed to ensure a smooth return to normalcy.

“Hence, the rollout of the plan must be well coordinated and combined with detailed planning to minimise undue disruptions. It is of utmost importance that all ministries and relevant agencies coordinate among themselves to ensure consistent implementation of the NRP at the federal government, state government and local authority levels.

“Another issue to address is the importance of communication. During the pandemic, communication channels have neither been adequate or clear, thus causing unnecessary confusion.

“To avoid misinterpretation and uncertainty, we urge the government to have early engagement with the stakeholders and industries to discuss the NRP,” he added.

The criteria used to determine low-, medium-, and high-risk sectors for reopening must be transparent, and all related standard operating procedures must be clear, he urged.

During the implementation of the NRP, NCCIM hopes that the government will extend financial relief and income support schemes, such as the Wage Subsidy Programmes, and the continued suspension of the statutory contribution rate.

“Enhanced targeted repayment assistance schemes, which include the granting of an automatic moratorium, one-off cash aids as well as grants to businesses, should be continued so as to provide support for all businesses,” he added.

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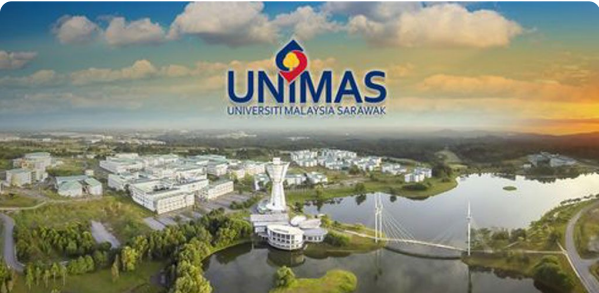
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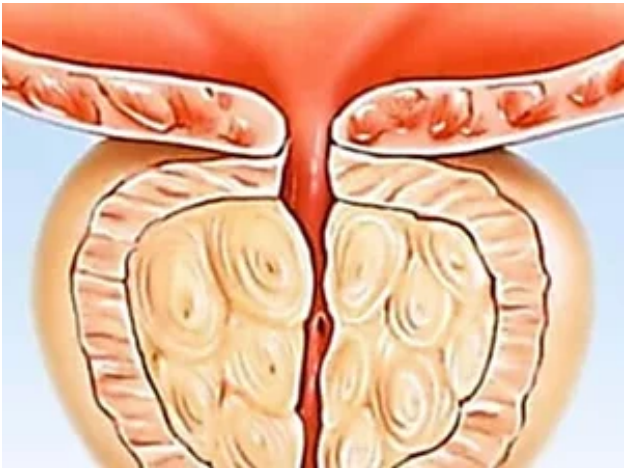


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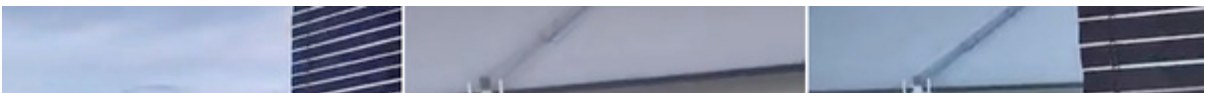
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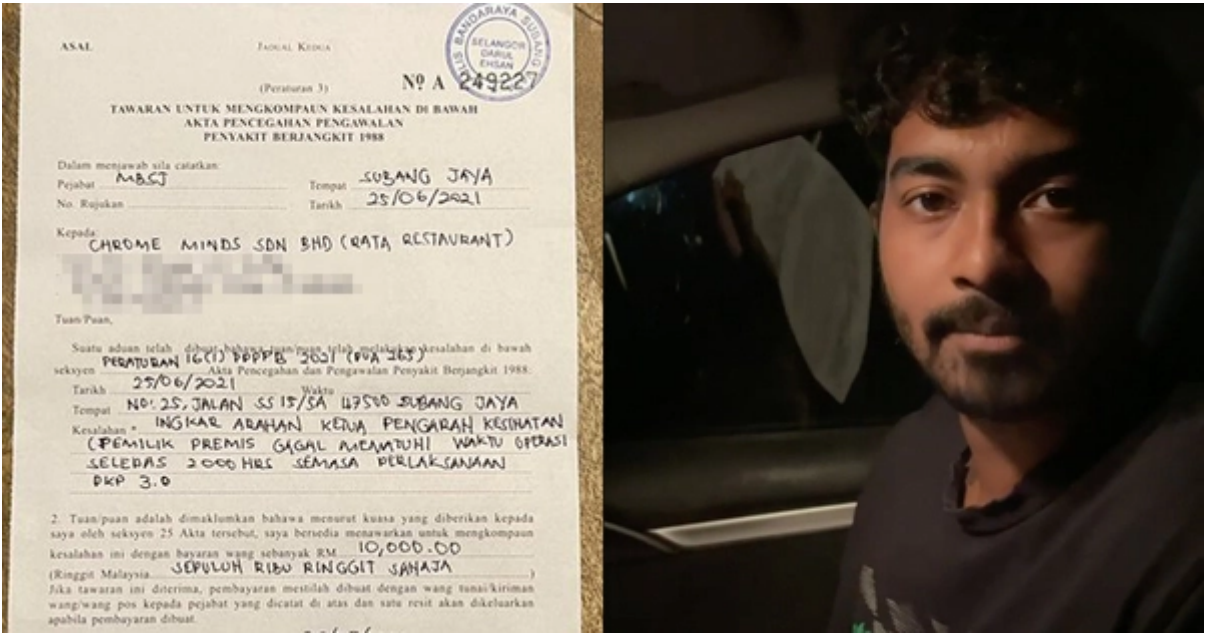
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