

4.8m Sara recipients use MyKad to buy basic items

GEORGE TOWN: A total of 4.8 million out of 5.4 million recipients of the Sumbangan Asas Rahmah (Sara) aid have used their MyKad to purchase basic necessities at registered premises nationwide as of this month.

Deputy Finance Minister Lim Hui Ying said Perlis recorded the highest usage rate at 94 per cent, followed by 93 per cent in Sabah and Kedah, while Penang recorded 88 per cent.

She said the figures reflect the growing effectiveness of the initiative, supported by various awareness and promotional efforts at both federal and state levels.

"The Ministry will continue to strengthen awareness campaigns to ensure more people benefit from this government aid, which is aimed at easing their financial burden.

"We have also significantly expanded the number of recipients from 700,000 to 5.4 million since April," she told reporters during a Sara outreach programme at a hypermarket, here, Saturday.

At the event, Lim met with 100 Sara recipients in Penang as part of the Ministry's effort to engage directly with urban communities.

She said to date, 3,700 retail premises have registered under the programme nationwide, enabling recipients to shop closer to home. In Penang alone, 190 such premises are available.

Lim added that starting May 1, the programme was enhanced by expanding the list of eligible items to 14 categories, including household and personal hygiene products, medicines, and school supplies like uniforms and shoes.

She also said the maximum Sara aid for 2025 has been raised to RM2,100 from RM1,200, a 75 per cent increase.

In total, the combined allocation for the Sara and Rahmah Cash Aid (STR) programmes has been raised to RM13 billion this year, marking the highest cash aid provision in the country's history.