

# High usage of MyKad for SARA program in Sabah

**BELURAN:** Sabah has shown a high rate of usage of MyKad for the Sumbangan Asas Rahmah (SARA) programme, with 94 per cent of recipients making purchases at registered premises.

Deputy Finance Minister Lim Hui Ying said there are 506,000 SARA recipients with RM500 million approved annually.

"Currently, there are almost 4,000 registered grocery shops and supermarkets in the country compared to 700 in 2024. In Sabah alone, there are over 430 registered premises and the total will rise to ensure better access in all areas," she said in a statement Monday, adding that the government is improving the scope of basic necessities allowed in the programme by expanding the existing 14 categories to include domestic cleanliness products, such as soap, detergent, dishwashers and floor cleaners from May 1.

On her working visit to Beluran with Finance Ministry delegates, Lim said it was part of their commitment to not only deliver financial aid but to meet the public.

"The main focus of the visit is to check out the implementation

of the Rahmah Cash Aid (STR) in addition to SARA and to directly interact with recipients as the programme allows the government the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the aid and to obtain feedback from recipients, especially from the interior of Sabah.

"In Malaysia, there are 566,000 STR recipients without bank accounts... in Sabah, 62,000 out of 830,000 STR recipients do not have bank accounts. Today, almost 400 recipients in Beluran who do not have bank accounts showed up to the STR cash payment programme," she added.

Lim also shared that RM410 million has been channelled for Phase 1 and 2 of STR payments in Sabah, with two more STR payments to be made in August and November.

"As such, a Bank Simpanan Nasional (BSN) initiative using a Mobile Bank Branch in today's programme offers various banking services, including deposits, withdrawals and financial advice without requiring residents to travel far. This service greatly helps rural residents in Beluran to access banking services easily," she said. — Bernama