

GOVT AID HELPS EASE THE PEOPLE'S BURDEN

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THERE was an air of expectation at a modest home in Taman Indah Seksyen 2, Melaka, on Friday evening when the 2021 Budget was tabled by Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz.

When some of the proposals were read out, siblings Loke Jun Jieh and Loke Chin Yee, who were watching the live telecast closely, celebrated their eligibility to receive government financial aid in 2021.

Jun Jieh, 25, who is disabled, and his sister, Chin Yee, 24, will receive monetary assistance worth RM450 and RM350 respectively.

Chin Yee, who works as a kindergarten teacher, said she was grateful to be a beneficiary next year as she had received RM500 and RM300

under the Bantuan Prihatin Nasional (BPN) and BPN 2.0.

Under Bantuan Prihatin Rakyat (BPR) which replaces Bantuan Sara Hidup (BSH), Chin Yee will receive RM350 under the allocation for single individuals earning less than RM2,500.

"There is a slight increase of RM50 under BPR from BPN 2.0. But any amount is a bonus for me.

"It will help to supplement my monthly income but I want to save it in the bank first. It will be kept for rainy days," she said.

For Jun Jieh, there is an increase in the payout from RM400 last year to RM450 in 2021 under the incentive allowance for disabled workers.

Jun Jieh, who is wheelchair bound, has been working as a food packer on a part-time basis with a non-governmental organisation for the past two years.

"I am happy to receive the assistance as I earn about RM150 a

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month. I am able to use the money to buy the things I need instead of depending on my family members," he said.

Meanwhile, mother-of-two Siti Sharmiza Abdul Razak said she was thankful to have qualified for BPR's RM1,200 aid.

The 32-year-old clinic assistant from Pandan Mewah in Ampang falls under the M40 category. She said the aid could not have come at a better time.

"I am grateful and extremely happy as this will ease my financial burden during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I will use the money sparingly for my family's daily needs and also stock up on our basic supplies," said Sharmiza, whose children are aged 7 and 4.

Sharmiza's colleague, 25-year-old Fazillah Sumarto, will receive RM350 under the category of single individuals.



Loke Jun Jieh



Loke Chin Yee



Siti Sharmiza Abdul Razak



Fazillah Sumarto

"I will be using the money to buy necessities and set aside some as savings," said Fazillah, who lives in Kerinchi here.

Salahudin Hyder Ali, 30, was grateful that he still qualified to receive RM350 aid as a single individual.

He said things had been looking up for him. He had quit his beverage business to work at a job which gave him a steady income before the Movement Control Order (MCO) hit.

"However, after the MCO and during the Conditional Movement Control Order, there were fewer chances of doing overtime at the factory. This

aid will indeed help.

"I used this year's BPN for my motorcycle maintenance, including the changing of tyres and I used the balance for my daily expenses.

"Once I get next year's aid, I will only spend on things that are necessary," he said.

Meanwhile, Amirul Akmal Nor Yusre would use the RM350 under the singles category to settle monthly bills.

The 28-year-old content executive said the aid could cover his utility bills for two months.

"With that, I will have extra cash in my hand," he said.