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## The positive knock-on effects of Permai, Penjana and Prihatin



Good move: (from left) Kuan, Teo and Sathi welcome the various aids

PETALING JAYA: Malaysians believe that the Malaysian Economic and Rakyat's Protection Assistance Package (Permai) has not only helped relieve the people's burden during the Covid-19 pandemic, but it can also inspire others to extend a helping hand to those in need.

Social activist Kuan Chee Heng said the special tax relief for donors who are helping Malaysians who are struggling with the socio-economic effects brought on by the pandemic can encourage more people to join and assist others.

Kuan, who goes by the moniker Uncle Kentang, suggested that groups or businesses which helped people affected by the pandemic should be recognised for their efforts.

Restaurant owner Teo Chee Kong, 55, said he was relieved to know that Permai's business rental reduction incentive has been extended to business tenants to help them through another challenging business year.

"We need this kind of assistance as our revenue has been badly affected," he said.

Another entrepreneur, K. Sathi Krisnan, said she was glad that the government will start implementing other plans to help lighten the people's burden, such as providing 150,000 laptops and gadgets to underprivileged students next month.

Sathi, who does charity work, said she got many calls from parents who couldn't afford such devices.

"This assistance is a big relief for parents," she said.

The government aims to provide laptops to students in 500 schools nationwide under Budget 2021.

Meanwhile, B. Krishna Kumar, who works at a job training centre, said he was glad that the government is helping job seekers enhance their skills and prepare for re-employment under the National Economic Recovery plan (Penjana) reskilling and upskilling programme.

"The allocation for skills enhancement will help those who have lost their jobs due to Covid-19 to acquire new knowledge.

"This can make our human capital more marketable to foreign investors," he said.

Young graduates Ain Nadjwa Idzwanna Akasah, 25, were also happy with some of the benefits under Permai, especially the three-month moratorium on her National Higher Education Fund Corp (PTPTN) loan, as she will now be able to help her parents in Pahang to recover from the massive floods recently.

"I can help my family financially especially after we were badly affected by the floods," said the marketing executive.

Ain Nadjwa, who has been working for about a year, said she was also relieved to receive the one-off RM300 cash assistance under the earlier Prihatin initiative.

"It may not seem like much but at least I could get my daily necessities with the money," she said.

Businesswoman Nurul Sheriena Musa said Penjana has helped her run her childcare centre for special needs children.

"I was very relieved by the assistance and it helped me cover some of my operating costs," she said.

<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2021/01/28/the-positive-knock-on-effects-of-permai-penjana-and-prihatin>