



Aminuddin presenting a certificate to a successful recipient of the TUNS grant during a ceremony in the Sikamat state constituency last year.



A file photo of Aminuddin (second from left) presenting a certificate to one of the recipients of the TUNS grant Mohd Syazwan Kamaruddin. Also present were state exco Ismail Ahmad (left) and Datuk Dr Mohamad Rafie Ab Malek.

Giving aid to entrepreneurs

ONE of the first initiatives undertaken by the Pakatan Harapan government after the 2018 general election was to set up the Negri Sembilan Entrepreneur Fund or TUNS.

Aimed at producing more successful micro-businesses, the state administration set aside RM3mil for the purpose in 2019 and grants were then given out to 1,046 entrepreneurs.

Those involved in the food, services, agriculture, beauty, textile, automotive, construction, handicrafts, medical, telecommunications and information and communications technology and retail

industries and had an annual sales of RM300,000 or had less than five full-time workers were eligible to apply for cash assistance.

Under TUNS, each successful recipient was given a grant of up to RM3,000.

The programme was so well-received by the people that the state government not only decided to continue with it but increased the allocation for 2020 to RM6mil.

As of mid-November last year, the authorities had approved 969 applications involving some RM2.85mil. In total, 2,014 individuals applied for the grants.

Those between 18 years and 40 years represented 46% of the applicants followed by 41-59 years (45.5%) and 60 and above (8.5%). Sixty-five per cent were females.

Since TUNS has helped micro-businesses increase their income by up to 15%, the state government has again agreed to keep it going and allocated RM3mil for the programme in 2021.

This time, the state government also agreed to introduce another initiative known as TUNS PLUS to further assist these entrepreneurs.

From this year, entrepreneurs will be able to apply for interest-free loans of up to RM15,000 to further expand their businesses.

"This will help their businesses become more competitive.

"They can use the extra capital to buy equipment, advertising or even promote their products," said Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Aminuddin Harun.

An additional RM3mil will be allocated for this which can benefit up to 200 entrepreneurs.

Apart from TUNS and now TUNS PLUS, the state government has also taken several other initiatives to assist the people ranging from fresh graduates, farmers, hawkers as well as petty traders.

There is a pressing need for this as the Covid-19 outbreak has caused many workers to lose their jobs.

One of the programmes it will continue is Siswazah Tani or better known as INSIST-9 which was first introduced in 2019.

Aminuddin said the state administration decided to come up with this initiative after the Statistics Department had proposed that it should venture into the agriculture sector to help balance the deficit between agriculture-based food production and manufacturing.

"In 2020, 51 graduates were given grants of between RM5,000 and RM10,000 to venture into the agriculture sector.

"This not only helped change their perception of the agriculture sector but also helped the state government address the problem of idle land," he said adding that the move was also to reduce unemployment among graduates.

Due to the success of INSIST-9, the state government has also set aside RM500,000 for the programme for this year.

In an effort to increase food production, the state government has also decided to introduce another programme known as Petani Muda with an allocation of another RM500,000.

"Under the initiative, non-graduates will also be able to apply for grants of between RM5,000 and RM10,000 to venture into the sector," he said.

Aminuddin said his administration will also take steps to develop the 10,500ha of idle land in the state. Tampin was the largest district with 4,171ha.

"Through collaborations especially with

the Agriculture Department, we have managed to turn 508ha of idle land into agriculture land in the past two years.

"For this year, the state government will set aside another RM1mil to assist such as to erect fence, build a piping network, to provide water pumps subject to a maximum RM15,000 per hectare," he said adding that another RM1mil will be set aside to provide incentives to food growers to produce 5,000 metric tonnes of greens and fruits.

Aminuddin said to help farmers get the myGAP and myORGANIC accreditations, the state government has also set aside RM500,000 this year.

"They will be able to apply for grants of up to RM10,000 each to get the certifications.

"This will be good as consumers will know their produce is of good quality," he said, adding that until October last year, 349 food growers have obtained the recognition.

And to allow hawkers to operate in conducive environments, Aminuddin said RM3mil will be spent to build food courts at strategic locations in the state this year.

Another RM1mil has been set aside to give a RM300 one-off incentive to 3,300 hawkers.

The Seremban City Council has also relocated some of these hawkers to 39 food courts which have a total of 817 lots.

To assist petty traders, the council has also built stalls at Arked Senawang and another 19 at Taman Paroi Jaya.

Lots were also now available at several other locations such as Dataran Senawang, Centrio, Garden Avenue, City Park and Taman Ampangan.

Aminuddin's administration had also helped small scale farmers who were not able to sell their produce due to the pandemic.

Many were unable to sell their produce to hotels and restaurants as well as tourist areas after the MCO as imposed.

Some farmers were even forced to throw away their produce as there was no market for it.

To ensure there was a continuous supply of greens, Aminuddin's government, in collaboration with the Agriculture Department, introduced a programme to help the farmers.

Each farmer was given free fertiliser, pesticide as well as seeds worth some RM5,000.

A total of RM675,000 was set aside benefiting 135 farmers.

The state also gave RM100,000 to the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (Fama) to be used as a revolving capital to buy produce from farmers who were unable to market these during the MCO.

As of Oct 15, 2020, Fama helped farmers market 474metric tonnes of produce worth some RM806,000.

Fama had also set up three drive-through centres known as Pasar Segar Terkawal in Seremban, Paroi and Jempol after the pasar tani was closed to contain the spread of Covid-19.

Salutations and Heartiest Congratulations
DYMM YANG DI-PERTUAN BESAR NEGERI SEMBILAN DARUL KHUSUS
TUANKU MUHRIZ IBNI ALMARHUM TUANKU MUNAWIR
 D.K., D.M.N., D.K. (PERAK), D.K. (PERLIS), D.K. (SELANGOR), D.K. (KEDAH), D.K. (KELANTAN),
 D.K. (JOHOR), D.K. (TERENGGANU), D.K.Y.R., P.P.T.

May Allah The Almighty Bless His Royal Highness's Reign
On The Occasion Of His Royal Highness' 73rd Birthday
 on
14th January 2021 (1 Jamadilakhir 1442H)

From
 The General Committee, Management & Members of
ROYAL SUNGEI UJONG CLUB