

Disabled community pleased with RM300 one-off payment

KLANG: The last three months have been very trying for visually disabled waiter Marcos Joel.

"Since our restaurant is not operational, there is no salary but just an allowance of RM600 monthly which my employer says will be paid to us until November this year," said Marcos, who has a degree in broadcasting and journalism.

Hence, the RM300 one-off payment for members of the disabled community announced by Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin under the government's Short-Term Economic Recovery Plan was most welcome, he added.

"Even though it's only RM300, it

will be very helpful," said Marcos, 29, who is also a part-time singer.

According to him, he was more interested in the RM1,000 given to employers for each disabled person they hired.

"I hope this will open the door to more employers hiring disabled workers as we are among the worst-hit by the movement control order (MCO) imposed to curb Covid-19," he said.

Disability Equality Training facilitator Peter Tan, 54, said the RM300 was appreciated but hoped for a more "realistic" amount to tide members of the disability community over.

"Regardless, the one-off RM300

assistance for us is a welcome relief in these difficult times.

"I just hope it will be increased to a more realistic amount to reflect the current cost of living," said Tan, a tetraplegic wheelchair user.

The government, he added, must also take note of oversight as there were more than 500,000 people with disabilities registered with the Welfare Department.

Academic Dr Mastura Mahamed said the RM300 was a good move, given that many from the disabled community were facing a hard time due to the MCO.

"It will ease their financial burden as most disabled people are self-employed," said Dr Mastura,

35, who is living with cerebral palsy.

The senior lecturer with Universiti Putra Malaysia's Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication said she also hoped more disabled people would find employment as the government would be giving financial incentives to those hiring them.

Universiti Teknologi Mara student Sharifah Nadhira Syed Iskandar, 29, also living with cerebral palsy, concurred and said she was happy with the initiative.

"It's a great initiative by the government to help ease the burden of the disabled, especially during these trying times," she added.

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Peter Tan

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