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ASW 2020 declares 10.1pc dividend (HL)

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Amanah Saham Wawasan 2020, which is the country's first multi-racial unit trust scheme offered by Permodalan Nasional Bhd, today declared its maiden dividend of 10.1 per cent.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is chairman of Yayasan Pelaburan Bumiputera, announced that PNB would make a total payment of RM160.59 million, for investments made between Sept 2, 1996 and Aug 31 this year.

PNB chairman Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid read the text of Dr Mahathir's speech.

Yayasan Pelaburan Bumiputera is the holding company of PNB, which in turn owns Amanah Saham Nasional Bhd, the body that manages the ASW 2020.

Besides ASW 2020, ASNB also manages the Amanah Saham Nasional and Amanah Saham Bumiputera.

The tax-exempt dividend will be credited into unitholders' accounts and they can update their account books beginning Sept 2 at all ASNB's branches as well as its head office in Kuala Lumpur.

For unitholders who have reached the maximum 50,000 units investment, the dividend will be paid by cheque in the second week of September.

When ASW 2020 was launched in Aug 28 last year, three billion units of RM1 each, at lots of 100 units, were offered.

Of the total, 1.53 billion units or 51 per cent had been allocated to Bumiputera investors while the remaining 1.47 billion or 49 per cent were for non-Bumiputeras.

As at Aug 22 this year, Dr Mahathir said there were a total of 333,491 Bumiputera unitholders with total investments of RM333.96 million and a total of 480,834 non-Bumiputera unitholders with RM1.25 billion total investments.

For the Bumiputera portion, there were a total of 120,336 unitholders of Akaun Remaja (youth) with total investments of RM140.73 million while there were 213,155 unitholders of Akaun Dewasa (adults) with total investments of RM213.16 million.

Akaun Remaja is an account in which parents invest on behalf of their children between the ages of 12 and 18 while Akaun Dewasa is for those between the ages of 18 and 29.

For the non-Bumiputera portion, there were a total of 156,028 Akaun Remaja holders (RM455.89 million) and 324,806 Akaun Dewasa holders (RM791.27 million).

Dr Mahathir added that there was still a balance of RM1.2 billion and RM222.83 million worth of ASW 2020 units which were yet to be taken up by Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera investors respectively.

He hoped that more eligible investors would buy the available units and benefit from the country's economic growth.

Dr Mahathir also hoped that unitholders would use their dividends to increase their investments as the scheme was a stable and profitable long-term fund.

At a Press conference at Menara PNB, Ahmad Sarji said of the 6.5 million Malaysians aged between 12 and 29 who were eligible to invest in the scheme, only 814,325 or 12.48 per cent had invested.

"(So far) there are five States which have investments below the national average (of 12.48 per cent)," he said.

The States are Terengganu (4.97 per cent), Kelantan (6.92 per cent),

Johor (9.5 per cent), Sabah (9.49 per cent) and Sarawak (10.33 per cent).

Commenting on ASW 2020's first year dividend, he said: "The 10.1 per cent dividend is very encouraging despite the current depressing market condition. It is a good beginning."

PNB's ASN scheme declared a 10 per cent dividend and 10 per cent bonus for nine months at the end of 1981. It attracted slightly over 80,000 investors in the first eight months after it was launched in April 1, 1981.

ASB unitholders received 12.8 per cent maiden dividend in 1990 and since it was launched, its investors have received dividend and bonus payments of between 12.5 and 14 per cent.

(As at Jan 31, 1997, there were 1.32 million ASN unitholders and 4.53 million investors in ASB.)

Ahmad Sarji was also asked whether PNB would raise the age limit for unitholders so as to attract more people to take up the ASW 2020 units, but he said: "We have no plan to extend the limit."

He also said it had no plans to offer the available units to non-individuals.

Ahmad Sarji said PNB would intensify its efforts to encourage more people to invest in ASW 2020.

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