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Military cadets, recruits to get higher allowance

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The Government has approved new allowances for military cadets and recruits in an effort to attract more youths to serve in the armed forces.

Defence Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar said the new allowances for the recruits were made to bring it in line with provisions in the New Remuneration System.

"The Government has agreed that the allowance for first-year cadets be increased from the current RM470 to RM751.

"From the second year on, the allowance will be increased from RM475 to RM806.50."

The new allowance for recruits will be RM407.50 from RM150 previously.

The new rates take effect from Feb 1.

However, Syed Hamid said the allowances for Sabah and Sarawak would remain unchanged until a study on the matter was finalised.

It had been recently reported that the armed forces faced a shortage of recruits in recent years.

There are now 120,000 men and women serving in the military.

Syed Hamid was speaking at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah International Airport upon his return from a three-day visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Syed Hamid said the adjustments were necessary to streamline the existing payment schedule and was an attempt to make the military more attractive.

On the proposal by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to introduce national service, Syed Hamid said it would instil a sense of patriotism and discipline among youths.

National service should not be discounted if it could help overcome social problems faced by society as a result of development and economic growth in the country, he said.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, Syed Hamid handed over 1,500 boxes of Hari Raya food packages to the Malaysian contingent of 111 soldiers serving in Croatia and Bosnia under the Stabilisation Forces.

The Malaysian delegation of 12 armed forces officers, three police officers and 14 Press members visited troops stationed at Split, Livno, Glamoc, Kupres and Sarajevo.

Syed Hamid also met Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, Bosnian Prime Minister Exdham Bicakcici and co-chairman of the Council of Ministers Dr Haris Silajdzic.

Also present at the airport were Armed Forces Chief Jen Tan Sri Ismail Omar, Army Chief Jen Datuk Seri Che Md Noor Mat Arshad and Defence Ministry secretary-general Datuk Azizan Hashim.

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