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National Special Fund now stands at RM30m

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THE National Special Fund, initiated to pool public donations to assist the Government in its expenditure, has so far accumulated RM30 million in contributions and pledges.

Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Wong See Wah said that the four-month-old fund has received support from individuals, companies and associations.

"Hopefully, other corporations and associations will come forward to contribute to the fund," Wong said, adding that contributions are tax-exempted.

"Although the ministry will not organise any more campaigns for the fund, we still welcome contributions.

"This is because it will take some time for the various bodies to sort out their activities pertaining to the contributions before they can channel it to the fund," Wong said.

He said the deadline for the contributions has not been determined. The campaign was initially scheduled for only a month, effective March 6, but it was extended to July 6 due to the encouraging response.

Yesterday, Wong received contributions from several companies in Kuala Lumpur. Country Heights Holdings' managing director Mr Ong Chong Sek presented a mock cheque for RM5,023,564 (worth of property and cash) to Wong while Wanita Umno leader Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman presented a mock cheque for RM82,500 from the movement.

Both Maybank Bhd's chairman Datuk Mohamed Basir Ahmad and Kumpulan Sime Darby's chief executive officer Tan Sri Nik Mohamed Yaakob presented mock cheques of RM500,000 on behalf of their companies.

Meanwhile, the Consortium of Metal Furniture Manufacturers' Encik Abu Zarius Abdullah presented RM20,000 and the Federation of Textiles General Goods and Garments Merchant Association Malaysia's Mr Bong Hong Lion presented RM10,000 towards the fund.

Wong said the contributions, which come under a supplementary budget, will be deposited in the consolidated account and can only be utilised after agreement from Parliament.

For contributions in the form of items, like jewellery, Wong said there will be a special ceremony to auction these goods, including that contributed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife.

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