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Pensioners-Payment

PENSIONERS GET RM200 SPECIAL PAYMENT, NOT 10 PERCENT HIKE

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 15 (Bernama) -- Government pensioners will only get a special one-off payment of RM200, not a 10 percent hike in pension as reported by most major newspapers today.

In a statement today, the Finance Ministry said the special payment was the third to be given by the government to pensioners, after the payment of RM100 a month for six months in 1999 and a one-off RM200 payment last year.

The ministry was clarifying erroneous reports attributed to Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Dr Shafie Mohd Salleh at a news conference in the Parliament lobby yesterday.

"The pension rate for pensioners and pension recipients has always been adjusted each time there is a salary adjustment in the public sector. This is done based on existing laws, namely the Pension Adjustment Act 1980 (Act 238) and other such laws," said the statement.

It said that for this year alone pensioners had been given a 10 percent pension adjustment effective Jan 1 and from Nov 1 pension will also be increased accordingly following the Sistem Saraan Malaysia (SSM) salary adjustment.

Citing an example in the SSM implementation, the statement said the M2 salary grade under the Sistem Saraan Baru (SSB) on salary point RM4,686.33 had been adjusted to RM4,751.33, an increase of RM65.

"The effect on a pensioner who retired before the implementation of the SSM is that his pension will be adjusted accordingly corresponding to the last-drawn salary. This means that his pension will increase by RM32.50 if he had at least 25 years of service," the statement said.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced the special one-off payment for pensioners.

Meanwhile, Dr Shafie said the government would adjust the pension payment in accordance with the present salary scales in the civil service.

This was a form of reward for pensioners as there was no bonus for them, he said.

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FA AHH YBY