

THE STAR

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# Shahrizat: Don't rely on handouts

THE Women, Family and Community Development Ministry will focus on productive welfare to achieve its target of eradicating hardcore poverty by the end of the year.

According to its minister, Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, this means that Malaysians must stop being complacent and not expect handouts from the Government.

"We are a nation of plenty but we have to work for it," Shahrizat told reporters after the launch of the Government Transformation Programme yesterday.

She expressed regret that foreigners were taking up jobs that locals were not keen on.

"The Government provides financial aid, employment and business opportunities, but it will be of no use if nobody takes it up," she said.

Shahrizat added that 44,643 households that have been classified as hardcore poor were currently registered under the e-Kasih database.

Women are the sole breadwinners in 9,687 of these households.

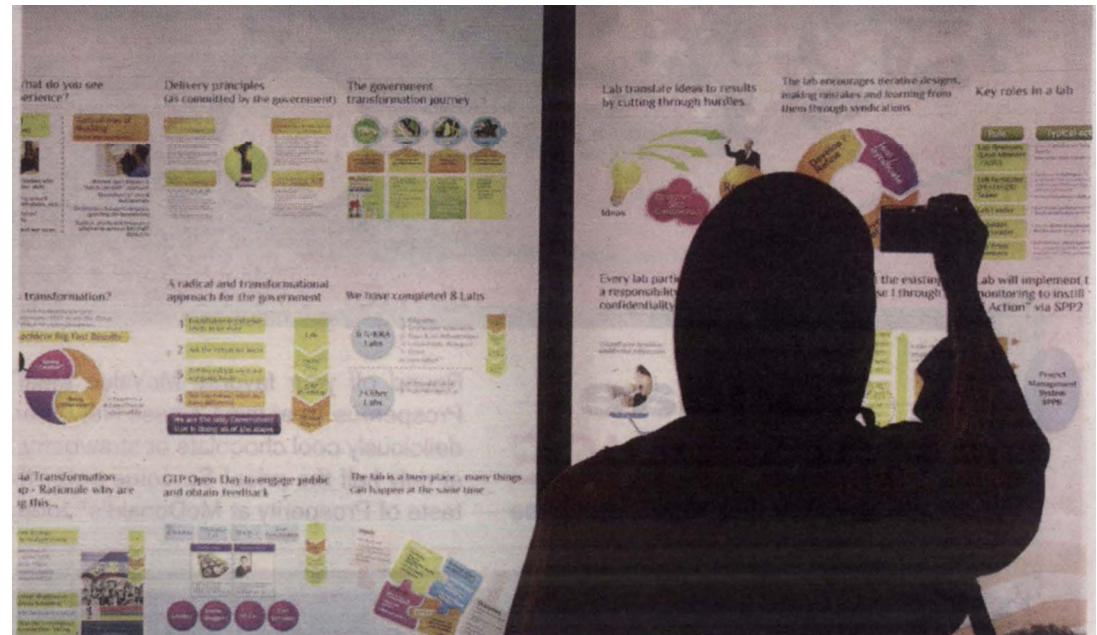
Shahrizat also said that her ministry would launch a smart card this year through which the Government would disburse aid to the poor.

She also said that the 1 Azam initiative, which was supposed to be launched in Johor next month, would have to be postponed due to the death of the Sultan of Johor.

1 Azam is a comprehensive programme that will provide employment and business opportunities along with training and micro-financing schemes to enterprising individuals in low-income households.

## Transformation

## Program



**Public interest:** A civil servant taking a photo at the Government Transformation Programme exhibition at the KL Convention Centre yesterday.