

Low-income group gets protection

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MySalam insurance scheme to give B40 a safety net should tragedy strike

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia's new insurance protection scheme for the low-income group is set to benefit some 3.69 million individuals in the country.

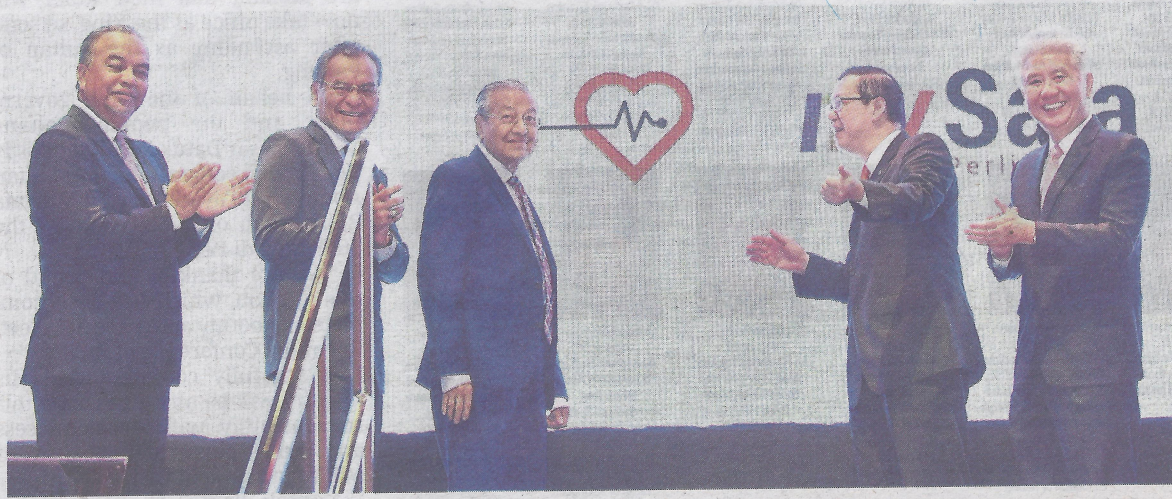
Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the "mySalam" scheme was targeted at helping Malaysians from the bottom 40 (B40) income group to cope financially if they were critically ill.

"Through this scheme, the federal government intends to assist the B40 to cope with financial difficulties arising from hospitalisation or when they are hit by any of the 36 critical illnesses that are covered by the scheme.

"For the B40 - particularly those who are self-employed or daily wage earners - the insurance claim can provide temporary relief, which helps them meet their daily needs while undergoing medical treatment," said Dr Mahathir at the launch of the mySalam scheme at the Treasury building here.

The scheme was announced during the tabling of Budget 2019 with an initial fund size of RM2bil contributed by insurance company Great Eastern.

Recipients of the government's



Good move: Dr Mahathir launching the mySalam scheme at the Treasury building in Putrajaya. Looking on are (from left) Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Amiruddin Hamzah, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dzulkefly Ahmad, Lim and Great Eastern Life Holdings Limited group chief executive Khor Hock Seng.

Bantuan Sara Hidup 2019 between the ages of 18 and 55 are eligible for the scheme.

The 36 critical illnesses covered by the scheme include cancer, heart attack and Alzheimer's.

Recipients will receive a one-off payment of RM8,000 if they are diagnosed with one of the illnesses.

They will also receive daily payments of RM50 up to 14 days as income replacement in the event of hospitalisation.

Dr Mahathir said the scheme was also aimed at raising awareness on insurance coverage among the B40.

"In 2017, the insurance penetration rate among B40 who are

employed was still at a low level of 30.3% compared to 50.4% for overall employed Malaysians.

"The mySalam scheme is a significant move to formulate a more inclusive financial development policy for Malaysia," he said.

A country's development, he said, could not be benchmarked merely

on economic growth or infrastructure development.

"A better quality of life, purchasing power and income distribution is a more meaningful benchmark to assess national development.

"Our government will ensure the nation's wealth is distributed more equitably through inclusive approaches," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said the government, despite facing financial constraints due to debts, would not stop coming up with initiatives that could ease the burden of the needy.

"Even if the government appears to be cautious when implementing such programmes, we will make sure our efforts will reach and benefit our target groups," he said.

He also expressed hope that the scheme would attract more contributions from other private insurance companies.

Also present at the event yesterday were Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng and Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

Watch the video
thestartv.com

