

M'sian family size shrinking

PM: Census findings crucial for targeted policy formulation

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SHAH ALAM: The average size of families in Malaysia has shrunk to 3.8 per household as the country faces a growing aged population, says Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

These were the key findings of the latest national census, which revealed that the number of those above 60 increased by 1.2 million between 2010 and 2020.

"It was recorded that those above 60 years old totalled 10.4% or 3.4 million of the population compared to 2010 when they made up 8% or 2.2 million.

"At the same time, the number of Malaysians in the younger age group decreased from 27.6% in 2010 to 24% in 2020," the Prime Minister said when launching the key findings of the Malaysia Census Report 2020 themed "Your Data, Our Future" yesterday.

Based on the census, he said, 6.8% of the population were above 65 years old while 69.3% were aged between 15 and 64 with the remaining 24% below 14.

Earlier, Ismail Sabri said the nation's population grew by an average of 1.7% over the last decade to 32.4 million.

Of this total, 29.8 million were Malaysian citizens while 2.7 million were non-citizens, he added.

"Of the 32.4 million, 52.3% are males while 47.7% are females, which is a ratio of 110 males to 100 females.

"The findings also showed that the state which has more women than men are the Federal Territory of Putrajaya with a ratio of 100 females to 96 males," he said.

Ismail Sabri revealed that the bumiputra community made up the largest population in the country, comprising 69.4% of the total population.

This was followed by the Chinese (23.2%), Indian (6.7%) and others (0.7%), he added.



Looking ahead: Ismail Sabri visiting the display booth after launching the Malaysia Census Report 2020 Shah Alam. - FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

He noted that the findings of the census were crucial for the government in formulating targeted policies to ensure a fair distribution of the nation's wealth.

"The statistics on the population and housing census can give a true picture of the current population in Malaysia, including the size, distribution, composition and the socio-economic characteristics of the population and housing.

"Such data will also be used to help the government bridge the widening income gap among Malaysians while eradicating poverty among the B40 group and marginalised.

"This is where the Statistics Department is tasked with coming out with the calculations of household income based on the B40, M40 and T20 categories," he explained.

He assured the people that the growing aged population would also not be left out with regards to policy implementation.

The findings of the census would also be used as a benchmark in measuring the achievements of the nation's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Prime Minister pointed out.

The data gleaned from the census, he said, would also be used to gauge the achievements of the 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP) aimed at improving the living standards of Keluarga Malaysia (the Malaysian Family).

Meanwhile, other findings of the census showed that the number of households last year increased to 8.4 million compared to 6.4 million in 2010. However, the average size of families in the country shrank to 3.8 per household in 2020 compared to 4.2 in 2010.

The census also saw the number of separations and divorces increasing two-fold from 0.8% in 2010 to 1.6% in 2020. Also increasing was the number of urban dwellers from 70.9% in 2010 to 75.1% in 2020.

There was a minimal growth in the country's Muslim population between 2010 and 2020 and a decline in those of other religions. The Muslim population grew by 2.2% with a decline recorded among practitioners of Buddhism (-1.1%), Christianity (-0.1%), Hinduism (-0.2%), others (-0.8%) and unknown religions (-0.1%).

Also present at the event were Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed and Statistics Department chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin.

The latest national census was completed on Oct 31 last year with a total of 9.2 million households interviewed. Some 1,000 findings of the census will be released in stages.