

## PerantiSiswa programme expanded to four more categories of B40 students, says Annuar

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KUALA LUMPUR: The PerantiSiswa programme will be expanded to a further four categories of B40 students, says Tan Sri Annuar Musa (pic).

The Communications and Multimedia Minister said the four new categories were students in foundation programmes at public institutions of higher learning, students under the Education Ministry's matriculation programme, Form 6 students in schools under the Education Ministry and students in Vocational Colleges that offer diploma studies.

He added that online applications for B40 students in the additional categories would open at noon on Thursday (Aug 4). "The expansion of the PerantiSiswa scope is expected to include more than 60,000 students from the B40 group in the categories I have mentioned," he said at a press conference at the Parliament media centre Thursday.

Annuar said applicants will get the Samsung Tab A8 LTE, which can accept a 4G SIM card. Prior to this B40 students who were eligible for the programme are those attending full-time diploma programmes and advanced bachelor's degree at IPTA and private higher education institutions under the management of the Ministry of Education, polytechnic and community college students under the Education Ministry, students of the Institute of Teacher Education (IPG) under the Education Ministry and students of the National Academy of Arts, Culture and Heritage (Aswara).

“Supply and delivery will be done by the five companies that were chosen through an open tender according to (geographical) zone,” he said. “We are expected to have the capacity to distribute 400,000 tablets. In the first phase, the procurement of 350,000 has been completed, while an additional 40,000-50,000 can be procured without a new procurement process,” he added.

He said phase 2 of the programme would be rolled out by the end of the month and officiated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob at UiTM Shah Alam. Annuar said the application for the second phase will end on Sept 30 and the subsequent phases will begin in October. He explained the programme is behind schedule by a month due to the open tender process.

Earlier, during the oral question and answer session in the Dewan Rakyat, Annuar said the Samsung Galaxy A8 LTE device was chosen as it is a reputable brand and model in the market. “All suppliers are also required to give a warranty of two years and this is one of the conditions,” he said.

He added that if there was a malfunction, the students could get replacements so that their studies are not disrupted. Annuar said there would also be a buy-back policy for the devices. He was responding to a question by Lukanisman Awang Sauni (GPS-Sibuti) on the status of the distribution of tablets through the PerantiSiswa programme and how many tablets would be distributed to students from the B40 group.

A total of RM450mil had been allocated in Budget 2021 under the PerantiSiswa Keluarga Malaysia programme to provide higher education students from the B40 group with tablets. The package is an initiative by the government in collaboration with selected telecommunication companies to supply a tablet device to every B40 student in institutes of higher learning.