

Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) president Datuk Tan Kok Liang (left), Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr N. Ganabaskaran.

By Farah Solhi (/authors/farah-solhi) - March 27, 2020 @ 9:42pm

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) is elated over the special allowance allocated for healthcare workers under the Prihatin Rakyat Economic Stimulus Package.

In expressing gratitude, MMA president Dr N. Ganabaskaran described Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin as "sincere" in rolling out the cash aid to the people.

"We are grateful beyond words upon learning about the increase in the special allowance for healthcare workers, from RM400 to RM600 a month beginning April 1 until the end of this pandemic.

"We are also happy with the RM500 million allocation for the Health Ministry, to ramp up the capabilities and resources in tackling the pandemic crisis," he said in a statement today.

However, the Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) voiced their disappointment over the package which it claimed to have failed to meet the needs of tourism enterprises, particularly the small-medium businesses (SME).

MATTA president Datuk Tan Kok Liang said the tourism industry saw a 90 per cent plunge in revenue this month and is looking at a near total-loss in business until June.

"From these figures alone, many businesses especially SMEs may have no choice but to start retrenching employees.

"What will happen after the handouts are fully given out by May when employees find themselves jobless because the businesses they used to work for have been forced to shutdown?

"From the way it looks, employees can look forward to some small relief in April and partly in May but after that, with the prospect of retrenchment looming, they are essentially on their own," he said in a statement.

Tan said many tourism enterprises were hesitant on taking "special loans" offered by banks to keep their staff members on the payroll due to concerns of additional debts.

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