

# Maslan urges bumiputras to change their mindset

**SHAH ALAM:** Bumiputras need to transform their mindset to be entrepreneurial and independent, Deputy International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Ahmad Maslan says.

He said it was high time for the community to move away as wage earners to venture into business in support of the country's vision to become a developed and high income nation.

"Most of them work for others unlike our Chinese counterparts who have been active in business for a long time.

"We should emulate this enterprising spirit and be an entrepreneurial nation," he said after opening the state-level Bumiputra Youth Entrepreneur Development (TUBE) mega programme by SME Corporation Malaysia here yesterday.

He said there were four aspects that were key roles for Malaysia to become a high income nation.

"They are *pendidikan* (education), *kemahiran* (skill), *produktiviti* (productivity) and *keusahawanan* (entrepreneurship)."

Ahmad urged youths to utilise platforms

such as TUBE to start their own business.

He said the fourth instalment of TUBE was opened for application and those who qualify can apply online at SME Corp's website.

"This year, it is known as TUBE Mega because a RM200ml allocation has been set aside and we are able to cater to the higher number of applications from budding bumiputra entrepreneurs.

"So far, RM500ml has been granted to TUBE to train 1,436 entrepreneurs, of which 1,425 registered their businesses and created 3,862 jobs," he added.

Open to applicants between 18 and 30, TUBE was launched in 2014 with an annual allocation of RM100ml to help young bumiputras start a business.

Applicants will be called for an interview and if shortlisted, they will undergo a three-week boot camp and business training, after which they will be required to submit a business plan and register their business.

Each of them will be given RM15,000 to start their business, which will be mentored for 12 months under a buddy system.

# That's sweet — there'll be no hike in sugar price

## Consumer ministry turns down firm's 'unreasonable' request to raise prices

By JOSEPH KAOSIR  
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**PUTRAJAYA:** There will be no further hike in the price of sugar, assures Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainuddin.

He said the top executives of a sugar company met with him recently and asked to consider increasing the price.

"The sugar company that wanted an increase in the price of sugar sent their CEO, their board members, their officers to see me.

"I told them, no way! Unless (the current situation) is affecting their factories and mills, I think it is only fair to maintain the current price," said Hamzah at a press conference after his ministry's monthly assembly.

He was responding to reports that MSM Malaysia Holdings Bhd, a top sugar producer in the country, wanted to increase the local sugar price by another 29 sen per kg to ensure profitability.

Hamzah said the request was unreasonable, especially after the Government sanctioned a hike of 11 sen last March.

The minister said global price of sugar was on the decline.

"I will not increase the price of sugar. Why

must I increase the price when everybody knows that at the moment, the world market price is going down?"

"Last year in November and December, it was true that the global price of sugar went up to about US\$0.22 (95 sen) per pound. But now it has gone down to about US\$0.17 per pound. So why are the suppliers asking for an increase in sugar price?"

"When we allowed the 11 sen hike last March, the increase should be enough to help the companies to cover their costs. Now that the world price has gone down, they should be able to cover previous losses.

"If businesses do not know how to manage their profit and losses, it is not my fault or the consumer's. It is not for us to ensure producers make money all the time," said Hamzah.

Earlier, Hamzah launched a ministerial campaign dubbed *#tanganlebleh* aimed at educating consumers not to be excessive, especially with the fasting month coming up.

Hamzah said there was a tendency for consumers to splurge when shopping or to waste food during Ramadan and the Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebrations.

"The campaign's slogan of *#tanganlebleh* is short yet catchy, and we hope it will educate consumers to practise moderation," he added.

## MAICCI hands five-point memo to Hamzah

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Associated

Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MAICCI) presented a five-point memorandum during a courtesy call on Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainuddin.

Its president Tan Sri Kenneth Eswaran, who led the delegation, spoke on the increasing number of foreign traders' participation in domestic trade fairs, food prices, urban poverty, fair trade practices and on ways to have a collaborative partnership between

MAICCI and the ministry.

In a statement, MAICCI secretary-general Datuk A.T. Kumararajah said Hamzah agreed to discuss cooperation at the state level and state chambers, micro-credit and SME vendor schemes, establishment of Indian villages under the urban poverty scheme and extended involvement of MAICCI to create more entrepreneurs.

He noted that Hamzah had said the Government would always look after the interests of all communities.

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