

# Monthly Sara assistance provides relief nationwide

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Recipients of the monthly Sumbangan Asas Rahmah (Sara) assistance, which continues this year, have begun receiving their payments, providing relief to more low-income households amid the rising cost of living.

With several improvements introduced to expand its benefits, the distribution of the assistance this year increased significantly, covering 8.1 million people with a total allocation of RM8bil, compared with 5.4 million recipients and RM5bil allocated last year.

The aid distribution, conducted in stages, began yesterday, with payments first credited to household recipients and senior citizens without spouses before extending to 3.1 million single



**Aid distribution:** People redeeming their Sara assistance at a supermarket in Taman Teratai, Kuala Lumpur. — Bernama

individuals on Jan 16.

A Bernama survey found that aid recipients had been visiting selected supermarkets since yesterday to utilise their credit ranging from RM50 to RM200, to pur-

chase essential items.

Azhar Ibrahim, 54, from Dungun, Terengganu, said the aid, despite its modest amount, had helped in covering his kitchen expenses, especially after he

quit his job at an iron ore mining company to care for his wife, who suffered a stroke.

Norazimah Wahab, 34, of Kedah said she was grateful for the government's continued aid, which had helped her manage her expenses after most of her savings were spent preparing her two children for school.

Aishah Mohd Mustapha, 28, a clerk in Shah Alam, Selangor, described the monthly Sara assistance as a lifeline for her family, helping to meet basic household needs.

In Negri Sembilan, Lim Chai Hee, 65, said the monthly aid had been a big help but expressed hope the amount could be increased in the future in tandem with inflation.