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ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR ASNAF FISHERMEN: RHB ISLAMIC BANK & LZNK LAUNCH HOUSEBOAT PROJECT IN TASIK GUBIR

Sik, Kedah – RHB Islamic Bank Berhad, in strategic collaboration with Lembaga Zakat Negeri Kedah (LZNK), recently held the Launch and Handover Ceremony of the Zakat Wakalah Distribution for the Economic Empowerment Project: Houseboat, benefiting members of the Tasik Gubir Inland Fishermen's Association.

The ceremony was officiated by Dato' Adissadikin Ali, Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of RHB Islamic Bank Berhad, together with Dato' Syeikh Zakaria Othman, Chief Executive Officer of LZNK.

In conjunction with the event, RHB Islamic Bank Berhad also presented its Corporate Zakat contribution of RM700,000.00 for the year ending 2024 to Lembaga Zakat Negeri Kedah. Over the past three years (2023–2025), RHB Islamic has contributed a total of RM1,850,000.00 Zakat payment to LZNK. From this amount, RM950,000.00 has been allocated as Zakat Wakalah for the implementation of the economic empowerment project in Kedah.

This year, as part of the ongoing commitment of both organisations to strengthen economic resilience, RHB Islamic Bank has contributed RM329,200 towards an economic empowerment initiative for the B40 asnaf community titled **“Program Pemerkasaan Nelayan Darat Tasik Gubir”** in Sik, Kedah. The project focuses on uplifting the freshwater fishing community, particularly the asnaf fishermen involved in inland fisheries. Through the provision of a houseboat, equipment and training, the initiative aims to enhance operational efficiency, safety and competitiveness among fishermen, thereby supporting them in achieving more sustainable livelihoods.

Dato' Adissadikin Ali, Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of RHB Islamic Bank Berhad, said, “This project reflects RHB Islamic Bank's commitment to driving impactful change in the communities we strive to uplift together. In collaboration with Lembaga Zakat Negeri Kedah, we are investing in the long-term socioeconomic wellbeing of the *asnaf* fishermen of Tasik Gubir. By equipping them with the houseboat, right tools and training, we aim to enhance their productivity and support them in building more secure and sustainable sources of income, ultimately safeguarding the stability of their families and society as a

whole. Furthermore, this initiative supports RHB's PROGRESS27 strategy in driving inclusive growth and fostering meaningful social outreach."

The ceremony was attended by invited guests including the Sik District Officer, representatives from the Kedah Tengah District Forestry Office, Sik District Fisheries Office, and the Department of Irrigation and Drainage from Kuala Muda, Sik, and Baling districts.

This initiative demonstrates the shared commitment of RHB Islamic Bank Berhad and LZNK to fostering economic empowerment within the ummah. It also highlights the importance of collective efforts of multiple stakeholders in advancing rural community development.

Targeted support of this nature has the potential to uplift asnaf fishermen by improving their quality of life and enabling them to generate sustainable income. Such initiatives are encouraged to be continued and expanded to ensure wider and long-lasting impact across vulnerable communities.