

DPM hits out at Pakatan for playing up price hikes

Malaysiakini.com

May 21, 2011

The opposition parties only know how to exploit the issue on price increases but they themselves do not know the best mechanism to tackle the problem.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said the opposition parties were not burdened by the responsibility to tackle the problem and thus they only knew how to blame the government for it.

He said the government always took into consideration various factors before deciding to raise the price of any commodity including fuel so that whatever measure it took would not burden the people.

"From time to time, when there are changes in terms of cost, we have to make adjustments, but we don't make decisions hastily.

"It's not that we say something today and implement it tomorrow. We have to study in detail the impact no matter how big the price increase is in the market," he said.

He said this to reporters after opening the Kemaman Umno delegates meeting at the 'Dewan Berlian', Kemaman Municipal Council today.

Muhyiddin said this when commenting on the attitude of the opposition parties who exploited the issue on the price increase for RON 95 fuel although the government had not decided on the matter yet.

Not a popular decision

He said that before the government increased the price of any commodity, it would study the reports from the various sectors including the Ministry of Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism for discussion at the Cabinet Committee on Supplies and Prices chaired by him.

"The increase in the price of fuel, gas or electricity is a fact that we must accept which occurs in any country in the world whenever there is an increase in cost.

"In neighbouring countries, whether in Singapore, Thailand, or Indonesia, the issue is the same, the only difference is the scale of the increase. In Malaysia, the issue (increase) exists but our inflation rate is among the lowest," he said.

He pointed out that Malaysians were easily affected whenever there was a price increase because all this while they had been assisted through the subsidy provided by the government.

However, he said, after a certain point the existing price had to be reviewed and the government had to rationalise the subsidy provided so that other development projects were not affected.

"This is not a popular decision, but if we don't do it, we will have less resources to run the country," he added.

Muhyiddin said if the government did not tackle the problem wisely, it would have to bear a massive rise in the amount of subsidy provided from RM10 billion to RM18 billion.

- Bernama