

LETTER | Muhyiddin is right about Anwar, people are suffering because of...

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LETTER | Muhyiddin Yassin's statement accurately describes the suffering of ordinary people affected by Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's decision to increase the price of diesel by RM1.20 or a 56 percent jump from the previous price.

Muhyiddin is right in asserting that Anwar lied when he claimed the price hike would only affect the “maha kaya” (filthy rich) and foreigners.

In reality, this diesel price increase significantly impacts not only the lives of ordinary people but also raises operational costs for farmers, small traders, and small contractors.

Less than 48 hours after the diesel price increase was announced, operators in several sectors have announced price increases for their services and goods. Among the first to issue price increase notices were concrete producers, followed by towing companies and vegetable farmers in Cameron Highlands.

The Tipper Truck Operators Association stated that the cost of construction

materials will increase by 30 percent, and there are already complaints among small contractors about the increase in the price of a six-wheel truckload of soil from RM180 to RM250. This will certainly lead to higher house construction costs for ordinary people.

Although there is no official notice, farmers have complained that the cost of working the fields has increased from RM450 per relung (0.28ha) to RM738 per relung. Tractor rental has increased from RM80 to RM120 per relung.

The cost of operating paddy machines has increased from RM130 to RM180 per relung. Even "backhoe JCB" rental has increased from RM450 per day to RM550 to RM700 per day.

The charity NGO Malaysian Relief Agency stated that their activities in helping people are hampered due to the increase in diesel prices, as the 4WD vehicles used to transport aid goods run on diesel. Moreover, the government has never considered that sacrificial cattle and gas cylinders are also transported on vehicles that run on diesel.

With the increase in diesel prices, the price of one part of sacrificial cattle has also increased by RM100, and the price of one gas cylinder has increased by RM4 from RM31 to RM35. Doesn't all this affect the lives of ordinary rakyat, who are not the filthy rich and foreigners?

Clearly, Muhyiddin's statement represents the voice of ordinary people, farmers, small traders, and small contractors who are severely affected by this excessive diesel price increase. There is not a single word in his statement mentioning anything about supporting smugglers.

As expected, Anwar, his ministers, and the "Madani" (read "mahaldahni") government are very defensive, in denial, and have a "we are never wrong" attitude when faced with criticism from the public and opposition leaders.

In their defensive mode, they quickly label and accuse their critics of supporting the filthy rich, foreigners, leakages, and smuggling activities.

In their denial mode, they do not want to accept that their actions have caused hardship to the people, increased the price of goods, and increased costs in the construction, agriculture, and service sectors, among others.

In their "we are never wrong" mode, it is ultimately the people who are blamed. To the "Madanis", it is okay for the government to raise diesel prices and Sales and Services Tax (SST) rates in the logistics sector. That is never wrong.

But for the rakyat, they are still at fault, even though they have to increase the prices of their goods and services due to the cost increases following the SST rate and diesel price hike. Even fisherfolk are blamed for the government's failure to

prevent leakages and diesel smuggling.

Although the minister's story about diesel smuggling by fisherfolk is illogical, they are still to be blamed. The government is never wrong.

In their "we are never wrong" mode, they fail to accept that the diesel price hike was done hastily, without proper stakeholder engagement, clear mechanisms, and with half-baked planning.

Planning failure

After announcing the diesel price hike, they realised they had overlooked many aspects, including the machines used by farmers and the frequency of using diesel-powered machines and vehicles in this sector.

Even the mechanisms for the Subsidised Diesel Control Scheme (SKDS) and the fleet card limits have not yet been finalised. After facing many criticisms and the chaotic situation, government representatives hurriedly conducted stakeholder engagement. Isn't this an example of the incompetence, stupidity, and planning failure of the Madani government?

Are all these issues about the filthy rich, foreigners, leakages, and smugglers? Absolutely not. The narrative of the filthy rich, foreigners, leakage, and smuggling

is a government-created narrative to justify why diesel prices were raised so high and the people's subsidy rights were denied.

It is also a narrative to cover up all the lies and enforcement and planning weaknesses of the government.

The fact is that Anwar has failed to fulfil his promise to lower fuel prices. The people would not be angry if Anwar did not promise to lower fuel prices 24 hours after taking oath as prime minister. The people are angry because Anwar did not keep his promise.

Anwar also lied when he claimed that the diesel price hike would only affect the filthy rich and foreigners.

Does Muhyiddin support smugglers by criticising Anwar? No. Muhyiddin is only asserting that, first of all, Anwar is a liar. Secondly, Muhyiddin wants to make Anwar aware that the ones affected by his half-baked planning are the ordinary people.

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