

Muda: Anwar's avocado, Najib's quinoa, what's the difference?

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Muda questioned what difference is there between Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anwar Ibrahim when compared to Najib Abdul Razak, in light of the impending sales and service tax (SST) expansion.

Entering the fray on the discourse over the tax expanding to imported fruits, acting Muda president Amira Aisya Abd Aziz said Anwar's remarks on avocados resembled Najib's on quinoa.

"If you want the people to save money and only buy local fruit and fish to avoid paying SST, is the local supply enough or not enough for everyone? Of course, it's not enough.

"Then, when the people asked, the finance minister, who is also the prime minister, said, 'If you want to eat avocado, pay a little more.'

"What is the difference between PM Anwar and PM Najib? Anwar with avocado, Najib with quinoa," she said in a statement today.

Yesterday, Anwar defended the SST expansion to imported fruits, saying this is meant to tax the wealthy.

Touching on the five percent tax on imported fruits, Anwar gave the impression that this would only impact those who consume expensive fruits like avocados.

However, his speech ignores that the tax will be imposed on all imported fruits, including those that are cheap and accessible to lower-income groups, such as apples, which are exclusively imported.

During Najib's tenure as prime minister in 2018, he faced criticism for revealing that he switched from eating rice to South American-produced quinoa.

'Why the silence from govt MPs?'

In her statement, Amira warned that the move will burden ordinary Malaysians.

The Puteri Wangsa assemblyperson said Malaysia imports not only luxury fruits but also other essential food.

"Fresh fish that people often eat will also be taxed five percent SST starting July 1," she said.

She named several fish commonly eaten by Malaysians, stressing that they were not classified for the consumption of the T20 income group.

Amira also took aim at the silence of government backbenchers.

“Most frustrating of all, the government MPs are silent, taking a wait-and-see approach.

“The true duty of an MP is to create policies that help the people, not blindly support policies that will oppress the people,” she said.

Consumer groups have warned that the blanket tax on imported fruit could lead to nutritional gaps for lower-income households.

However, a local nutritionist highlighted that many locally grown fruits can meet dietary needs.

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