

Opposition senators: Price hike reasons laughable
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Opposition senators found the reasons for the recent price hike in essential goods "laughable".

NONE "What ever we may call it, the fact is, prices have gone up," said PKR Senator Syed Husin Ali (left).

He mocked one of the reasons cited for the cut in sugar price subsidy - health concerns.

"Meat can cause high blood pressure, eggs and butter can cause an increase in cholesterol levels - so is the government going to increase the price for these things on grounds of health concerns?" he asked.

He pointed out that the withdrawal in subsidies, especially for essential goods such as petrol and sugar, would only burden the underprivileged. Yet independent power producers get a subsidy of RM19 billion.

"The rich are benefitting but the poor have to suffer," he told reporters at the Senate lobby today, demanding better justification for the price hikes.

The argument that the prices of essential items in other countries are higher is nonsensical, said Syed Husin, who is also the PKR deputy president.

"There are countries where their rice is cheaper than ours, there are countries where the price of meat is cheaper than ours, and there are countries where their fruits are cheaper than ours!" he exclaimed.

Government waste

Last week, the government had increased the prices of three types of fossil fuels, sugar and cooking gas.

NONE Also at the press conference were senators Tunku Abdul Aziz Ibrahim (DAP), S Ramakrishnan (DAP) and Mustafa Kamal Mohd Yusoff (PKR).

Ramakrishnan said the government should avoid wastage, which is rampant, and stop white elephant projects rather than increase consumer good prices.

"Besides the subsidy for the IPPs, Approved Permits (APs) are still being given to cronies," he said.

"The government can get a lot of revenue from the APs but they are given out free (of charge)."

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