

Gov't wants MPs to 'rubber stamp' fuel-hike decision
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Why the debate when the decision has already been made and executed?
MCPX

Unamused Pakatan Rakyat members of parliament raised this in the lengthy debate over the recent fuel price hikes.

Among the first to raise this point, Abdul Hadi Awang (PAS-Marang) said it reflected that Parliament has become a mere rubber stamp for the executive branch of government.

"I wish to state here my disappointment over the belatedness of this motion, which was tabled after the government had already declared the hike in fuel prices which led to the rise in prices of other goods and thereby burdening the people," said the PAS president.

Arguing that everyone was burdened by the general price increases as a result of the fuel hike, he was equally critical of the media for its failure to fairly report the public debate on the issue.

"The media looked for ignorant people to express support for the fuel hike," he lamented.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Shahrir Abdul Samad tabled a motion this morning seeking support for the government's measures over food, oil and commodities price increases, including the reduction of oil subsidies.

Coming on the heels of the 40 percent petrol price hike announced on June 4, the motion was hotly debated by MPs on both sides of the House for about six hours.

Wan Azizah: No prior consultation

Opposition leader Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail also followed up on the PAS leader's point during her speech on the motion.

"The interests of the people is sacred. I will not collude with the demand of a government to go through with its agenda to raise the price of fuel by asking this august House to approve it," said the PKR president.

Salahuddin Ayub (PAS-Kubang Kerian) in his speech said he would have respected the government had it brought together community leaders and experts to debate and discuss the issue of a fuel price hike before the decision to raise the price of oil and diesel.

"This could have happened in the form of a consultation with people of all political persuasions or an emergency parliamentary session to thrash out the issues," said Salahuddin.