

# PM: PRICE HIKE NOT TRADERS' FAULT

NSY- 2/12/2021 pg. 4

## Govt to import frozen chicken, halt fish exports, says Ismail Sabri

PUTRAJAYA

**T**HE increase in prices of essential goods is due to the accumulated costs at various levels of the supply chain before they reach traders.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, who attributed the increase in prices of essential goods to the accumulated costs, said traders and wholesalers were not to be blamed.

"It is true that daily essentials are more expensive now. Traders and wholesalers are not responsible for this increase in prices. I see it as resulting from the supply chain.

"Take chicken, for example. Breeders, factories and wholesalers all have their own costs. The prices are already high by the time the goods reach traders," he said after conducting price checks on essential items at MyFarm Outlet Kasih here yesterday.

He called on the Agriculture and Food Industries Ministry to cooperate with the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry to resolve the issue.

"At the same time, we need to seriously look into the involvement of middlemen."

Ismail Sabri said the government would import frozen chicken to enable the people to obtain chicken at a lower price.

"For a start, we will bring in 200 container loads," he said, adding that imported frozen chicken is expected to be available at local markets by next week.

Ismail Sabri said the price of local chicken had increased recently.

"The increase in price of chicken to RM9.80 per kg is unusual, although prices had exceeded RM10 per kg before. But this seldom happened because chicken prices normally ranged between RM7 and RM8 per kg," he said.

On the issue of fish supply, Ismail Sabri said the Agriculture and Food Industries Ministry would temporarily stop fish ex-

ports to ensure fish was easily available at reasonable prices at local markets.

"If possible, we will temporarily stop fish exports because it is important to meet the needs of our people. We do not want them to be burdened with price hikes, especially for wet goods."

He said this approach, taken to check price increases, had been implemented in 2013 when he was the agriculture and agrobased industry minister.

On the 50 sen increase for a packet of ice cubes, Ismail Sabri said this should not have happened as the government had not increase water and electricity tariffs.

"The price of ice should not have increased because the government maintains water and

electricity supply at a cheap rate without any increase," he said.

He said this situation was unlike the hike in price of bread, which was due to an increase in the price of flour.

"Our country does not grow wheat, we import flour. So this has an impact on the price of bread."

Following complaints from various quarters, Ismail Sabri urged the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry to conduct a thorough study on production costs.

"We want information on costs at every level of the supply chain.

"The government does not want the people to be burdened with price hikes for essential goods due to production costs."

**Bernama**