

# 'COST OF LIVING BEING TACKLED'

**PM refutes claim of not seriously dealing with issue, outlines measures taken by govt to resolve woes**

**KUALA LUMPUR**

**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has dismissed allegations of not seriously dealing with the

high cost of living.

Anwar, in a statement yesterday, said he and his two deputies, Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, had presided over several committees, including the Implementation Monitoring Committee of the National Action Council on Cost of Living (Naccol).

Naccol, chaired by Zahid, who is also the rural and regional development minister, had met twice.

“The accusation that the prime minister is no longer focused on the agenda of dealing with the cost of living is merely a wild accusation.

“Moving forward, the government will intensify efforts to monitor and implement the

Madani policies and strategies by holding meetings every month,” he said.

Anwar also called on all parties to work together with the government to strengthen efforts in helping the people and reducing the polemic, as the cost of living issue demands a “whole nation approach”.

Yesterday, Anwar presided over Naccol’s meeting, which saw a presentation by the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry (KPDN) on the initial results of the Border Economy — Supply of RON95 Petrol and Diesel Without Subsidy programme.

Anwar said there were various positive impacts from the pilot project in Perlis, adding that it was the ministry’s goal to tackle the leakage of subsidised petrol and diesel, especially in areas near the border.

“Preliminary reports show that government subsidies can be saved because the sale of petrol and diesel does not involve subsidy allocations. The opportunity to increase national income is also high through the sales tax imposed on foreign vehicles.”

Anwar said KPDN had recorded a low number of misappropriation cases in Perlis throughout the implementation period, adding that the programme had also reduced congestion at petrol stations in the state.

The ministry would be releasing details of the pilot project’s achievements and study the possibility of implementing the programme in other states, he added.

Anwar said the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (Fama) would intensify its Marketing Development Programme by targeting to implement the Farm Direct Sales Programme at 2,000 locations this year, compared with 1,000 locations last year.

“This sales programme is expected to benefit all levels of consumers including traders because the prices offered are much lower as the goods are brought directly from the source of supply,” he said.

In preparation for Hari Raya Aidilfitri, Fama was also organising Ramadan Madani Special Sales at 268 locations at farmers’ markets, permanent farmers’ markets, Rural Transformation Centres and Medan Niaga Satok, as well as the Syawal Madani Special Sales at 113 Fama marketing outlets, starting tomorrow.

Anwar said KPDN also presented the status of the Rahmah Sales programme at 16 supermarkets and its network in 118 parliamentary constituencies and 8,223 locations, and the distribution of 71,400 Rahmah Baskets by 10 main contributors to recipients

under the hardcore poor category.

He said the Menu Rahmah initiative had been implemented at 1,706 food premises and restaurants, and the Rahmah Ramadan bazaars had attracted the participation of 913 traders in 41 locations.

To ensure the safety of road users, Anwar said the Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry, together with Proton and Perodua, had launched the Rahmah Package for motor vehicle servicing at a cheaper price.

“This is an effort by the Madani government as well as all parties; especially players in various industries, such as the retail industry, food and beverage, textiles, hospitality, food-based manufacturing and automotive sector to help the public,” he said.

Anwar said the meeting also took note of the presentation by the Local Government Development Ministry, in collaboration with the Cement and Concrete Association of Malaysia, to implement another Rahmah initiative which would be announced later.

Anwar added that the Finance Ministry, Economy Ministry and KPDN were preparing the details of more targeted subsidy methods, which would be submitted to the National Economic Action Council at the next meeting.