

Keeping high prices in check

Take only reasonable profits, Anwar urges middlemen

By **MARTIN CARVALHO**
mart3@thestar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: Prices of fresh produce can be kept in check - all it takes is for middlemen to accept reasonable profits, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"It is the middleman that causes prices to rise. If the middleman can play a role or take reasonable profits, prices will be under control," the Prime Minister said.

Another method of controlling the prices of local fresh produce is to supply items such as vegetables directly to agro bazaars or bazaars.

After a walkabout at the Bazaar Ramadan Precinct 3 yesterday, Anwar said prices of such goods could be maintained by the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry and the Agriculture and Food Security Ministry through Agro Rahmah Sales.

"If we take fresh produce from the farms directly to the markets, the prices will be way lower," he added.

However, he said the prices of imported goods could not be controlled this way.



Straight from the farm: Anwar gifting a bag of fresh produce to a visitor after launching the Agro Rahmah Sales at the Ramadan bazaar in Putrajaya yesterday. — Bernama

Meanwhile, Anwar announced that rental for stalls at the Ramadan bazaar in Putrajaya would be lowered to RM850 a month from the current RM1,000.

Based on the success of the bazaar here, he said their operations could be extended beyond this period.

Earlier, Anwar visited several booths set up under the Agro Rahmah Sales at the bazaar.

A total of 14 types of vegetables, four types of frozen seafood, chicken and eggs were sold below usual market prices to help those in the B40 group.

The Prime Minister later spent

time visiting other food stalls before leaving for Seri Perdana to break fast.

Also present at the walkabout were Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Minister Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub and Deputy Agriculture and Food Security Minister Chan Foong Hin.