

## EASING THE PEOPLE'S BURDEN

# India-Malaysia talks led to lower rice import prices, says Anwar

**BUTTERWORTH:** The price of imported rice from India has been reduced slightly following successful negotiations with the Indian government during Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's visit to the country last August.

"They agreed to sell the rice at a cheaper price. We hope this will ease the people's burden," Anwar said at the launch of the Madani Cheapest Sale Programme in Kampung Masjid Timah here yesterday.

He added that the federal gov-

ernment was committed to easing the people's burden, especially by ensuring basic necessities remain at a low price.

He said the hosting of these cheap sale programmes could provide healthy competition, thus putting pressure on the market price to be lowered.

He added that the one-day sale offered 1,000 chickens and 200 bags of rice for free to visitors.

He said visitors could also buy fresh fish below market price as they were sourced directly from fishing boats.

"One can buy fresh fish at a cheaper price if they are obtained directly from fishermen, without the use of middlemen.

"That is why we encourage fishermen to use apps so that people can buy directly from them. This will also create healthy competition in the market."

Anwar spent about 30 minutes mingling with the traders and visitors at the programme.

On a related matter, the Malaysian Competition Commission's (MyCC) study on rice and padi issues has been presented to

the special committee and Agriculture and Food Security Ministry senior management.

Its deputy minister, Datuk Arthur Joseph Kurup, said the report aimed to find a solution to the shortage of local white rice.

"We received the report. MyCC presented it to the senior management of the ministry. It has also been discussed (thoroughly)," he said at a press conference after the launch of the 2024 Malaysian Hybrid Beef Industry

Potential Seminar in Parliament

on Friday.

However, Arthur revealed there was no timeline or specific date yet for when the report would be made public.

"The content of the report cannot be disclosed until it is approved by the ministry.

"We will provide an official report in the near future."

In July, the ministry confirmed that MyCC was conducting a study on the domestic padi and rice industry, including the allegations of a cartel within the sector.