

# 'TARGETED SUBSIDIES AIM IS TO SAVE NATION'

Govt has to take some unpopular measures to stabilise the economy, says PM

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**T**HE implementation of targeted subsidies has to be done to save the country, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

At the Prime Minister's Department monthly gathering here yesterday, Anwar said the government had to take unpopular measures to stabilise the economy.

"Who wants to implement targeted subsidies? We must realise that whatever we do, we will be attacked with all sorts of lies and accusations.

"Those wearing songkok, robes and turbans have continued to lie when we've told them that all prime ministers before this had agreed to implement targeted subsidies, but there has been no political will to do so," he said.

Last month, the cabinet agreed to implement targeted subsidies on fuel, starting with diesel, which was projected to save the country RM4 billion annually.



*To prevent drastic increases in the cost of goods and services, subsidies will be continued for traders using diesel commercial vehicles and for public transport, as well as fishermen. BERNAMA PIC*

On May 21, Anwar announced the fuel subsidy rationalisation exercise in a national address. He said subsidies for diesel would be withdrawn for "the rich and foreigners".

To prevent drastic increases in the cost of goods and services, he said subsidies would be continued for traders using diesel commercial vehicles and for public transport. Diesel subsidies would also continue for certain categories of fishermen.

A cash aid would be given to eligible individuals who owned private diesel vehicles, such as small traders and farmers.

The government has intro-

duced the Budi Madani individual and Budi Madani Agri-commodity cash aid programmes, where 30,000 recipients will receive RM200 each.

Yesterday, Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan announced that diesel subsidies for certain groups in Peninsular Malaysia would be discontinued from midnight yesterday.

He said the price of diesel would rise to RM3.35 per litre based on the automated pricing mechanism.

He called on those eligible to apply for subsidies in the Budi Madani programme and the subsidised diesel control system.