

PM'S WARNING TO SUBSIDY RECIPIENTS

Business operators who raise prices despite receiving diesel aid will have permits revoked

NURADZIMMAH DAIM
PUTRAJAYA
news@nst.com.my

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday issued a warning to all businesses that indiscriminately raise prices despite qualifying for the subsidised diesel control system.

He warned them that they could face severe action, including having their business licences revoked if they raised prices of services or goods.

In citing school buses, he said the operators should not be raising prices without a valid reason.

"Why raise prices if you benefit from the diesel subsidy? We don't exploit the poor, and savings from targeted subsidies can be redirected to aid the people.

"For instance, some nine million people have benefited from the RM10 billion STR (Rahmah Cash Aid) allocation (this year)," he said at the Public Service Department's Madani Aspirations gathering at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre.

It was reported that the government was considering expanding the list of transportation eligible for diesel subsidy.

This included expanding the quota for school and express buses under the Subsidised Diesel Control System (SKDS 1.0).

The Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry had said it was reviewing all the grounds for applications and appeals, and would expedite them for consideration by the Diesel Subsidy Approval Committee.

Anwar said some quarters had asked the government to postpone the diesel rationalisation plan.

However, he said the implementation was necessary to curb fuel leakages, pointing out instances where foreign fishing vessels had abused subsidised diesel meant for local fishermen.

"The number of vehicles (in the country) increases by eight per



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at the Public Service Department's Madani Aspirations gathering in Putrajaya International Convention Centre yesterday. PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

cent annually.

"However, diesel consumption was found to have increased by 20 to 30 per cent. This means there are leakages."

It was reported that 23 new segments of goods transport vehicles, as well as those in public transportation, would benefit from the revised SKDS.

Recipients would get fleet cards to continue buying subsidised diesel at RM2.15 per litre, compared with the current market price of RM3.50 per litre. For private vehicle owners, they would receive RM200 monthly under the Budi Madani scheme.

On a separate issue, Anwar affirmed his stance of non-interference in police investigations.

The cases notably included the acid attack on national football player Faisal Halim and the killing of 6-year-old autistic boy Zayn Rayyan Abdul Matiin.

Addressing concerns from the public regarding the progress of these investigations, Anwar said: "If it were up to me, I want the police to answer tomorrow.

"But there is a process and (the investigations) must be conducted thoroughly and not based on the perception of who we think is guilty."

Anwar said he had spoken to Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Razarudin Husain and federal police Criminal Investigation Department director Datuk Seri Mohd Shuhaily Mohd Zain.

He said he had asked them to "find a way in their investigation, but not to simply punish people".

"I may be the prime minister, but I am also human. I want to know why this happened, where a

child was abused and murdered."

Anwar also said the government was not planning to hire Singaporean teachers.

"It is not true. What I discussed with (Singapore Prime Minister) Lawrence Wong is a possible scheme where teachers from Singapore assist and volunteer to go to rural areas in Sabah and Sarawak to teach English.

"Listen First, instead of harping on social media with the wrong facts. (You) can ask first (without making assumptions)."

Earlier, Anwar said action would be taken against civil servants found to undermine the nation's strength and Federal Constitution.

He said civil servants should always abide by the Rukun Negara and strive to maintain peace in the country.

"What is our pledge as civil servants in the Rukun Negara? Hence, there are certain aspects in the constitution that we cannot question, be it statements from the Malays, Chinese, Sabahans or Sarawakians. I do not care (from whom).

"Do not undermine the strength of the nation and the core principles of the constitution. If you do, we will take action and prosecute," he said.

Present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Zulu Ali and Public Service Department director-general Datuk Seri Wan Ahmad Dahlan Abdul Aziz.

Page 1 pic: A fleet card issued to eligible companies to get subsidised diesel.