

DISBURSEMENT IN STAGES

PM confirms RM1 b funding to boost Kedah padi production

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday reiterated that the government has approved RM1 billion for the implementation of a programme to boost padi production in Kedah.

He said the allocation would be disbursed in stages.

"We've allocated RM1 billion," he said at the Health Ministry's Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration here.

He said this in response to a statement by Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor that the state would continue to demand RM200 million

annually from the federal government as a special incentive for maintaining padi cultivation areas to ensure the country's rice supply.

Sanusi was also reported to have rejected a proposal by the Town and Country Planning Department on an annual payment

of RM41 million to Kedah under the National Food Resources Land Usage Master Plan.

In February, Anwar announced that RM1 billion had been approved for the Muda Agricultural Development Authority as an incentive to implement a programme to boost rice production

in Kedah.

"The additional RM1 billion is expected to ensure increased productivity and at least meet local demand from 56 per cent to 70 per cent," he said during the Prime Minister's Question Time session in the Dewan Rakyat.