

'More local products under Sara'

PM says Malaysian businesses should benefit from the aid programme

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ALOR SETAR: More local products should be included in the list of items that can be purchased with the RM100 cash aid under the Sumbangan Asas Rahmah (Sara) programme, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said the programme is a good opportunity for local entrepreneurs to showcase their products to consumers.

"We encourage the inclusion of more local products. We can see things like Baling's coffee, soy sauce from Kuala Kedah or Alor

Setar or even from Kelantan.

"Products from micro, small and medium enterprises are also being given attention and consumers can purchase them through the Sara programme," he said when met at a Sara outreach programme in Kupang, Kedah.

Anwar gave assurances that the Sara programme is not just confined to major supermarkets in urban areas but also grocery stores and shops in rural areas.

The Prime Minister also expressed satisfaction with the implementation of the Sara initiative despite a glitch affecting the system in the initial days of the programme.

"All issues have been resolved and the system is now functioning well.

"On the first and second days, there were indeed some temporary glitches, but now it's all smooth. For the past four or five days, there hasn't been a single complaint," he said.

Asked if there was a need for additional measures, Anwar said any policies or improvement for the aid scheme would be discussed under Budget 2026, which will be tabled next month.

"For now, the system is running well. As for anything else, whether new efforts or policies, we will discuss them during the Budget,"

he said.

It was reported that the Finance Ministry had assured that continuous improvements to the Sara system would be made on a daily basis, particularly to handle the increase in users during weekends and festive seasons.

In July, the government announced a one-off RM100 cash aid for every Malaysian aged 18 and above to help ease the rising cost of living.

Earlier, when closing the state-level Program Madani Rakyat (PMR) 2025, the Prime Minister said the cash aid initiative has drawn attention from foreign leaders with some admit-

ting it would be difficult to replicate in their own countries.

"Vietnam's Prime Minister (Pham Minh Chinh) recently announced aid of about RM50 per person for his people. He asked me how (we implemented assistance such as Sara). We are spending RM15bil on this Sara initiative," he said.

Malaysians can use the Sara aid until Dec 31 at more than 7,300 registered retail outlets nationwide to buy over 100,000 essential items across 14 categories, including staple foods like rice and eggs, hygiene products, medicines, school supplies and personal care items.