

GOV'T WILL CONTINUE EFFORTS TO KEEP RISING PRICES IN CHECK – PM ANWAR
DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
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IPOH, Aug 24 (Bernama) — The government will continue to find ways to ensure that the prices of goods in this country are at a level that does not burden the people, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said.

He said these include increasing food production as well as the introduction of additional measures.

Anwar said the government does not take the issue lightly despite receiving criticism over the matter from the public, whom he said may not fully understand the problems behind the rising prices of goods

“The best example of that (government measures) is the work of Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub (Minister of Domestic Trade and Cost of Living who died recently), he was always thinking about how to negotiate with companies, shops and producers, how to reduce the price (of goods).

“But the whole world is facing this problem and we are still trying to resolve it as best we can. Now Armizan (Acting Minister of Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Datuk Armizan Mohd Ali) is also helping so that this effort can continue. We will continue to take additional measures,” he said.

Anwar said this when officiating the Mega@Tambun Rahmah Sales at the Mydin Manjoi parking lot here today.

Anwar said efforts to keep rising prices in check so as not to burden the people were not easy, but as a responsible government, it will continue to look for solutions.

He went on to explain the types of issues faced by the government and cited how India had raised taxes by 40 per cent for the export of garlic and red onions last week.

“This means that there are days where we can control (the situation) and there are days when it is difficult to do so because India increased taxes by 40 per cent to export onions. If we are going to farm our own it will take some time before there are results.

“But when it comes to chicken and eggs, Alhamdulillah, at least under our administration, we have those. The government has to pay subsidies to cover the price of chicken, if we don't, prices will be high,” he said.

Anwar said the public sometimes may not understand the issues behind rising prices, adding that if the prices of certain items were not too high, it meant the government had been providing subsidies.

Anwar said this would also mean that the government would need some planning for the future, such as to ensure higher domestic production to rely less on exports.

“I have told all the major government-linked companies like Sime Darby, Guthrie, Felda that they have to think about this because we import too much food. The land in Malaysia is fertile but we import a lot of food items.

“So, for that reason, we have directed that these companies also bring bigger revenue output. That’s why Khazanah, for example, cooperates with companies such as Farm Fresh for milk and so on for domestic production.

“That way we can lower the cost a little because we produce domestically. If they are imported, prices will be higher,” he said.

Earlier during the event, which had attracted some 8,000 visitors, it was announced that total sales as of 4.30 pm had reached RM270,000 covering 36 items.

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