

UNITY GOV'T TO PROTECT PADI FARMERS' WELL-BEING, BOOST THEIR INCOME
DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
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ALOR SETAR, July 15 — The Unity Government will ensure that the well-being of padi farmers is protected by increasing their income, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

In this connection, he said several pilot projects on the five-season crop in two years for padi cultivation had been undertaken to boost padi production, including by the Muda Agricultural Development Authority (MADA) and Kedah Zakat Board.

Anwar said RM3 billion was needed to upgrade infrastructure in padi planting areas to enable the implementation of the five-season crop in two years.

Therefore, Anwar urged farmers to give their cooperation to make a success of this programme to boost padi output and thus increase their income.

“If asked about Anwar’s intention, I would say that with the cooperation of my friends, our administration wants to ensure high income for padi farmers, increasing it from RM1,200 to RM1,800 a month,” he said.

The prime minister said this when speaking at the Kedah-level “Sentuhan MADANI” (MADANI Touch) programme with farmers, breeders, fishermen, rubber tappers and smallholders at the MADA headquarters here today.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Agriculture and Food Security Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Sabu, Home

Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali.

Anwar said among the infrastructure that needed to be upgraded are irrigation systems and roads, while expenditure was also required for agricultural inputs.

“We have discussed with the Agriculture and Food Security Ministry and MADA, an important agency not only in Kedah but also for the country.

“They say for this project on five-season crop in two years to succeed, certain infrastructure must be in place, irrigation networks, roads and so on. They say we need to start in two to three years and must provide RM3 billion,” he said.

Anwar said local padi output was crucial to ensure self-sufficiency in food production, as stated in the National Agrofood Policy.

“The country cannot import fully. If anything happens, we must have the capacity described as self-sufficiency, from 50 per cent to the target of 65 per cent,” Anwar said.

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