

KERATAN AKHBAR

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Govt seeking ways to cut food costs

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► 'Ensuring sufficient production, supporting domestic producers of eggs, chickens and vegetables, among measures being looked at'

BUKIT MERTAJAM: The government is focusing on finding means to lower the price of food items and other raw materials, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said among measures being looked at are ensuring sufficient production and supporting domestic producers of eggs, chickens and vegetables.

Anwar was commenting on a statement by former prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, who called on the government to find ways to lower the price of raw materials.

"It's okay, let's listen to his (Ismail Sabri) point of view. If I compare the month and a half of the minister in charge now (to the previous one), I can admit that what is being done now is more earnest," he said, after attending a *Majlis Kenduri Rakyat* in his hometown at Cherok Tok Kun.

Speaking at the ceremony, Anwar added that in the short time since he was appointed as prime minister, the presence of international investors from Europe, China and the United States in Malaysia was much more encouraging than in previous years.

"With this confidence, the ringgit

has strengthened. If our currency falls, this will lead to high import costs and an increase in the prices of goods. When the prices of goods increase, including the cost of food, this will burden the people."

He said Budget 2023, to be retabled on Feb 24, would touch on digitalisation and the modern agriculture sector to ensure that the economy remains sustainable.

Anwar said he would also consider higher allocations for Penang, Sabah and Sarawak, which were deemed to have received less attention before.

He said although Penang was the largest tax contributor to the nation, the state was often marginalised in terms of federal budget allocations.

Anwar also stressed that the unity government under his leadership would continue to focus on carrying out its responsibilities despite the antics of certain parties in disputing

the policies being implemented.

He did not specify which parties he meant but said the government had a lot of work that it needed to focus on to help the people instead of dealing with such antics.

"No need for us to entertain their antics. We don't accept salary also they are angry. If I take (they) say it's very high, this is the problem with politicians who do not know why we fight and lead.

"We show a good example to the leaders. Who does not want convenience? I also want, but we must think of our responsibility, that it is the people who will suffer."

He was speaking at a high-tea session with the community at Lembah Makanan Bandar Perda, Bukit Mertajam on Monday.

He said leaders need to set a good example and stop actions that destroy the country, Bernama reported.

"I do not deny that there are many cases but I've said since I became prime minister, I will not tolerate (them) and I express my appreciation to my deputy prime ministers, ministers and deputy ministers.

"I seem to work fast. I said reduce salary, we reduced it. I said be thrifty, we are thrifty. Politicians have their responsibilities, civil servants have their responsibilities, only then can the country rise again."