

KERATAN AKHBAR

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Minister: Subsidies hard to justify in the long term, but will continue for now



The government will continue the consumption subsidies currently being implemented at least in the short term, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed.

He said the petrol, cooking oil, electricity tariff and other subsidies are being continued to lower the cost of living for the people.

As for maintaining these subsidies in the medium to long term, he said it will be assessed in detail to ensure the government's finances are not adversely affected.

"So far, we have done our best by providing consumption subsidies amounting to RM77.3 billion for 2022. This is the highest subsidy ever borne by the government in history.

"It would be difficult for us to justify (such) a large subsidy over the long term, (but) in the current situation, it has allowed the government to help the people," he told reporters after attending a dialogue session on current economic issues with the industry and non-governmental organisations here today.

Mustapa, who is also a member of the Special Task Force on Jihad Against Inflation, expressed the intention to empower consumer bodies in dealing with the rising prices of goods.

"The government will continue to assist the people to handle this problem. National and state-level seminars will be organised to raise consumers' awareness as we don't want traders taking advantage of them by increasing prices exorbitantly.

"Our hope is that through communication, the people will have a better understanding of the current situation, and know what the government has done and will do to curb the rise in the prices of goods," he added. -- BERNAMA