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'Govt committed to easing cost of living'

MALAYSIA MADANI

'GOVT COMMITTED TO EASING COST OF LIVING'

Initiatives like Menu Rahmah reduce the people's burden, help govt fight inflation, says Rafizi

KUALA LUMPUR

THE government will continue to implement initiatives to ease the people's burden, especially in dealing with the cost of living.

Economy Minister Rafizi Ramli said the government implemented the Menu Rahmah initiative under the Payung Rahmah programme to help the poor.

He said the government implemented the People's Income Initiative (IPR) to eradicate poverty and improve the people's income through agricultural, food business and services operator initiatives.

"When more food items are sold at lower prices, whether through Menu Rahmah or IPR, it will create competition that will ease the prices of ready meals and, in turn, help the government curb inflation," he said recently.

For Ramadan, the government introduced Bazar Ramadan Rahmah under the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry's Payung Rahmah initiative at 38 locations nationwide.



Rafizi Ramli

Bazar Ramadan Rahmah was implemented with the cooperation of traders, who the ministry engaged with to ask them to offer food at Menu Rahmah prices to help reduce the cost of living.

Another initiative introduced to ease the people's burden is the Festive Season Maximum Price Control Scheme for the Chinese New Year celebration in January. It covered eight items, including pomfret, white shrimp, garlic from China, pork belly and lean and fatty pork.

This year, the government allocated RM200 million for the Price Standardisation Programme to ensure rural folk, especially those in the interior and islands, pay the same prices as city folk for seven essential goods — white rice, coarse sugar, flour, cooking oil, liquefied petroleum gas, RON95 petrol and diesel.

The programme has helped

more than 1.2 million residents in 798 rural areas in six states — Sabah, Sarawak, Kedah, Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang.

Rafizi said Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil introduced the Unity Package prepaid mobile Internet plan priced at RM30.

The initiative aims to provide Internet access to youths, the B40 group, senior citizens, disabled people and armed forces and police veterans.

Phase 1 of the Sumbangan Tunai Rahmah cash aid worth, totalling RM1.67 billion, had been channelled in stages to 8.7 million people in the B40 group since Jan 17.

"The inflation rate is expected to remain manageable at 2.8 per cent to 3.8 per cent this year amid more stable prospects.

"The government is committed to ensuring the national economy remains strong, resilient and sustainable to safeguard the people's wellbeing," Rafizi said.

He said efforts were focused on ensuring economic restructuring strategies and initiatives take into consideration the people's needs.

"This is to ensure the goal of becoming a high-income, inclusive and sustainable nation can be achieved, in line with the Malaysia Madani aspirations."

Malaysia's February headline inflation, as represented by the Consumer Price Index, remained moderate at 3.7 per cent, same as in January, after peaking at 4.7 per cent in August last year. **Bername**