KERATAN AKHBAR

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Addressing concerns over Padu's data privacy, Rafizi says ownership remains with Putrajaya and govt agencies

Economy Minister Rafizi Ramli said all data used by Padu is still governed by existing Acts of the respective government departments or agencies. — Picture by Miera Zulyana

PUTRAJAYA, Dec 29 — Economy Minister Rafizi Ramli has today assured the public that the owners and ownership of data used by the Central Database System (Padu) to disburse targeted subsidies to Malaysians will not change.

He said all data used by Padu is still governed by existing Acts of the respective government departments or agencies.

"What we do in the meantime, we have data sharing agreement between the agencies so that we can share [the data]," Rafizi told a press conference here.

His response came following questions by the press over concerns about previous data leakages involving government agencies.

He added that previously this was one of the reasons behind government departments and agencies' unwillingness to share their data, which posed difficulties to the establishment of Padu.

"Of course, the government is going to put forth an Omnibus [Act] by quarter two or three of 2024 that allows us to connect the dots of separate Acts. So data ownership is still by the respective agencies, however, the [Padu] will be owned and managed by the Department of Statistics.

"How do we handle the data is already regulated by existing Acts. And although all these agencies contribute to Padu's database, not all the agencies can retrieve from the database," Rafizi said.

When asked about the cost of the database system, Rafizi said the government did not have to utilise additional allocation, while the setting up of the system was 'free of charge' yet government servants.

"What we did was, we looked at the 2023 Budget, what's readily available, we pinched from here and there and from 2024 Budget.

"It's about RM2 million for the hardware," he said.

Padu will be launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim on Tuesday next week, January 2.

Afterwards, Malaysians have until March 31 to update and validate their information in the database to receive targeted subsidies.