



**LAPORAN LIPUTAN MEDIA HARIAN
SABTU 9 APRIL 2022**

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UKKMAFI

UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN PERTANIAN DAN INDUSTRI MAKANAN
(UNTUK EDARAN DALAMAN MAFI, JABATAN DAN AGENSI SAHAJA)

TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
9/4/2022	SEE HUA DAILY	ONLINE	

陈泓缜提醒市民 访斋戒月市集严遵SOP

2022年4月9日



亚庇国会议员陈泓缜走访亚洲城斋戒月市集，并派发蜜枣。

亚庇9日讯 | 亚庇国会议员陈泓缜提醒市民，造访斋戒月市集时记得严守标准作业程序（SOP），做好防疫措施，避免疫情找到新的突破口，传染于市区。

他今天下午造访亚洲城斋戒月市集，派发500份蜜枣予开斋的穆斯林摊贩与市民后，对媒体如此表示。

亚洲城斋戒月市集是亚庇市区数一数二的大型市集。碍于亚庇市政厅的防疫措施，此次亚洲城斋戒月市集减少至73档口。已经停办了两年的亚洲城斋戒月市集，主要由联邦农业销售局（FAMA）协调主办。

「如果不是雨天的关系，相信有更多的市民造访市集，购买开斋食物。现场所见，摊贩和市民都佩戴口罩，在入口处登录吾安系统。我提醒各位市民，必须时刻保持警惕，不让疫情寻找到突破口，重新飙升。」

他指出，毕竟经济不能锁太久，经过了两年停办后，摊贩们都渴望可以趁斋戒月赚一笔生活费。

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「在这个新冠肺炎变成地方流行病过渡期，我们必须适应新常态，与病毒共存。」

TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
9/4/2022	BUSINESS TODAY	ONLINE	

Soaring Food Prices, Government Intervention Program Needed ASAP!



Finally, Malaysians could enjoy *berbuka puasa* (breaking of fast) by having a sumptuous meal with their loved ones without limitation on the number of people gathering together and social distancing during this Ramadan month after two years of the pandemic. However, the rising food price inflation continues to pose challenges, especially among low-income households who are still trying to recover their economic livelihoods during this endemic period.

Although the government has extended the Keluarga Malaysia Sales Programme (PKM) till June to reduce the financial burden of the *rakyat*, vegetables remain one of the most nutritious food items experiencing soaring prices.

According to the Consumer Association of Penang (CAP)'s statement in November 2021, the price for red chillies had gone up from RM13 to RM19 per kilogramme (kg) and RM14 for green chillies from RM10 per kg previously.

When we consider the vegetable price reduction by 20% under the PKM scheme, the price for red and green chillies per kg should be RM15.20 and RM11.20, respectively.

However, when we look at the retail price from the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA), the average pricing of red and green chillies in Seberang Perai Tengah, Penang yesterday (April 7, 2022) is at RM18 and RM12 per kg, respectively.

The increasing price trend indicates that consumers had to spend more money buying the same amount of chillies, a common ingredient to cook curry.

Therefore, there is an increasing concern that Malaysians with low-income levels will be forced to "downgrade" by purchasing cheaper food such as bread and instant noodles to mitigate the impact on their purchasing power and what little savings are left.

With reduced income, the bottom 40% (B40) have to lower their food intake. They are relatively less capable of buying healthy food relative to the pre-pandemic era.

Nonetheless, the increase in Producer Price Index (PPI) and Consumer Price Index (CPI) show that rising food price inflation will not subside anytime soon.

The Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) revealed in its latest findings that PPI for local production – an output-based index that measures the average change in commodity prices for local market sales valued at factory prices – has increased from 9.2% in January 2022 to 9.7% in February 2022. Higher primary commodity prices have increased PPI.

The manufacturing index has experienced a 7.9% increase in February 2022 compared to 7.0% in January 2022. The sub-manufacturing index for the manufacture of vegetable & animal oils & fats is the second-highest contributor to the overall manufacturing index, at 18.6%. The manufacture of refined petroleum products witnessed a 20.3% increase, followed by the manufacture of basic chemicals, fertilisers & nitrogen compounds, and plastics & synthetic rubber in primary forms (13.1%).

In a month-on-month comparison, the PPI for local production has increased to 2%, compared to 1.3% in January 2022. Among all manufacturing subsectors, the manufacture of vegetable & animal oils & fats witnessed a 3.2% increase, followed by the manufacture of refined petroleum products (2.1%) and the manufacture of electronic components & boards (0.5%). As a result, the manufacturing index on a month-on-month basis rose from 0.8% in January 2022 to 1.3% in February 2022.

On the other hand, the CPI increased moderately by 2.2% – from 122.5 in February 2021 to 125.2 in February 2022.

A rise in food inflation is the main attribute to the CPI increase.

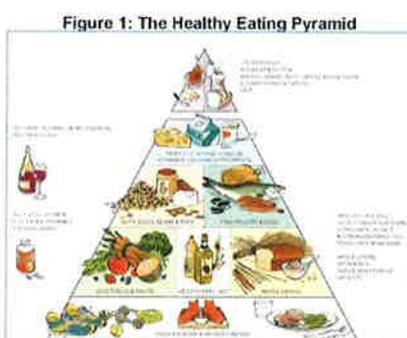
Chief Statistician Datuk Seri Mohd Uzir Mahidin indicated that the 3.7% increase in the Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages category was mainly due to the rise in the sub-category of “food at home” by 4.1% over the same period. Nevertheless, he did not mention vegetables are the essential stuff used for cooking preparation at home.

On the other hand, the other sub-category, namely “food away from home”, increased from 3.1% in January 2022 to 3.6% in February 2022. The relaxation of Covid-19 related standard operating procedures (SOPs) has resulted in more Malaysians eating out once again, among other social activities.

No doubt meat items such as cooked beef (6.4%), murtabak (6.2%) and satay (5.4%) are contributing the most to the increase in the “food away from home” index. Yet, vegetables (4.3%) consist of a certain proportion of the index besides from milk, cheese & eggs (5.1%) and fish & seafood (3.6%).

The CPI “food away from home” sub-index shows that Malaysians, in general, are placing a balanced and healthy diet as their priority.

We could also refer to “The Healthy Eating Pyramid” published by the Department of Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health, as shown in Figure 1.



Source: Department of Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health

In short, a balanced and healthy diet consists of different kinds of food in a certain amount of quantities and proportions so that the requirement for calories, proteins, minerals, vitamins and alternative nutrients are deemed adequate.

Statistics seem to show that most Malaysians have balanced meals comprising meat, vegetable and dairy intake.

While a Malaysian newborn in 2019 can expect to live up to 75 years, compared to 71.9 years in 1990, 9.5 of those years are likely to be spent in poor health – 0.4 years more than in 1990. “Social determinants of health” (SDOH) such as housing, education,

jobs, incomes, access to nutritious food and physical activity, for instance, could be the leading factors to poor health.

Therefore, those with limited access to nutritious food have a higher risk of being diagnosed with non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, obesity and heart disease.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO)'s 2018 data, coronary heart disease-related deaths in Malaysia reached 34,766 or 24.69% of total deaths.

Imagine those B40 communities who lost their jobs or income during the pandemic: how could they afford to buy increasingly expensive vegetables for their nutritional intake?

With soaring vegetable prices, food truck and coffee shop owners, among others, with limited cash flow only could cut the vegetable portions served in order to reduce associated operating costs ranging from salaries of employees, rent, utility charges and cooking gas.

- Here's what the government could do; work closely with several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Food Aid Foundation, The Lost Food Project and Pasar Grub, distributing leftover but consumable food or "lower quality" vegetables and fruits to the B40 communities who are most vulnerable to food insecurity.

To ease the food aid delivery, the government should mark and map and include all the B40 families onto their geographic information system (GIS) for data collection, planning and implementation, especially those who are living in interior and squatter areas;

- Integrate food and nutrition-focused programmes with different transfer modalities such as in-kind, cash or vouchers into the social protection system.

Low-income households, in particular, can use food vouchers or cash to buy food. It would ensure everyone has a basic income, giving them the ability to cover their basic spending needs and enjoy nutritious food;

- Provide subsidies for seeds, fertilisers and pesticides to be paid directly to the farmers through a coupon system.

The farmer could use the coupon to buy high-quality seeds from any vendor or company. The vendor also can use the coupon to claim payment from the government. This approach would create healthy competition among vendors besides stimulating agricultural activities. At the same time, it would motivate farmers to produce high-quality vegetables with sufficient quantities for domestic needs, allowing Malaysia to be less dependent on imports; and

- FAMA and related government agencies should do more in terms of logistics by assisting rural farmers to store and transport agricultural products to major cities of Malaysia. So, the rural farmers no longer have to travel across muddy, rocky roads, selling vegetables to the end-users.

In a nutshell, the government has to intensify and enhance the policy mechanisms to guarantee the welfare of farmers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers alike.

The price ceiling (maximum price) or price control mechanism that is targeted only at the retailer, i.e., market vegetable seller, is not sufficient to counterbalance the effects of rising food price inflation.

As such, the government must take pro-active measures to address the issue of profiteering by focusing on the middlemen in the supply chain who dominate and fix the prices, as even confirmed through investigations by consumer groups, for example.

Both the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Malaysia (KPDNHEP) and FAMA are the responsible government stakeholders to conduct regular monitoring and enforcement – ensuring farm, wholesale and retail prices are set at reasonable and acceptable levels.

TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
9/4/2022	MALAYSIA GAZETTE	ONLINE	

FAMA channels donations to 73 asnaf in Kelantan via Ramadan Roadshow programme

KOTA BHARU, April 8 (Bernama) — The Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA) has channelled donations contributions to a total of 73 asnaf (poor Muslims eligible for tithes) at Telipot Mosque and several other areas in Kelantan yesterday through its Ramadan Roadshow programme.

Its deputy director-general (Development), Datuk Mohamad Mustahapa Awang said the donations were in line with the Keluarga Malaysia (Malaysian Family) concept implemented by the government and could highlight the aspirations of the people in the country who are always united and helpful to each other.

“Each recipient will receive a food kit of basic necessities worth RM200. Such activities will be continued throughout the country to help those in need,” he said in a statement today.

He said the programme could also indirectly highlight FAMA’s role in the local community and in helping the needy during the month of Ramadan.

Earlier, Mohamad Mustahapa said the programme was also attended by Bank Rakyat regional director (East Coast of Peninsula) Syed Nasser Hussain Syed Othman Ali.

“The Ramadan Roadshow this time includes the MyRakyat programme at Telipot Mosque Ramadan Bazaar and the distribution of ‘gulai kawah’ (Malay special stew) to visitors.

“Besides this, there will be breaking of fast and Tarawih prayers held with the local community as well as the delivery of services by FAMA and Bank Rakyat to help the local community to understand the roles and tasks performed to meet the needs of stakeholders,” he said.

He also said that Bank Rakyat had contributed to the success of FAMA’s Ramadan Roadshow programme through donations worth RM414,000 to FAMA on March 31 at the Dewan Dato’ Zainal Abidin, FAMA headquarters in Bandar Baru Selayang, Selangor. The donation is in the form of food kits that will be donated to almost 2,070 people comprising asnaf nationwide