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Inflation up 1.8%

Hike in February driven by housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, as well as recreation, sports and culture activities and transport: Chief statistician

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Inflation up 1.8% in February: Statistics Dept

KUALA LUMPUR: Inflation increased by 1.8% in February this year, with index points recorded at 132.1 against 129.8 a year earlier, according to the Statistics Department.

Chief statistician Datuk Seri Mohd Uzir Mahidin said the increase was driven by housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels (2.7%), recreation, sport and culture (1.6%) and transport (1.2%).

"However, the other main groups that recorded a slower increase were restaurant and accommodation services (2.9%), health (2.2%), food and beverage (F&B) (1.9%) and education (1.5%)," he said in a media statement yesterday.

He said F&B, which contributes 29.8% of the total consumer price index (CPI) weightage, recorded a slower increase of 1.9% in February compared with 2.0% in January.

Mohd Uzir also said monthly inflation continued to show an increase, with housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels at 1.3%, restaurant and

➤ Increase driven mainly by housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, recreation, sports activities, culture and transport

accommodation services at 0.6% and transport at 0.4%.

He said core inflation increased at the same rate as January at 1.8% due to increases in F&B, restaurant and accommodation services, which recorded expansion of 3.1% and 2.9% respectively in February.

On inflation at the state level, he said most of the states recorded increases below the national inflation level of 1.8%.

However, five states recorded increases above the national inflation level, namely Penang (2.7%), Pahang (2.4%), Selangor (2.1%), Perlis (2.0%) and Sarawak (1.9%).

He said all states registered an increase in the inflation of F&B, adding that the highest increase was in Putrajaya (3.2%), followed by

Selangor (3.0%), Penang (2.5%), Labuan (2.3%), Sarawak (2.2%), Perlis (2.2%) and Pahang (2.1%).

Other states showed an increase below the national inflation of F&B of 1.9% in February.

He said there was an increase in expenditure class of cereals and cereal products by 2.5% in February (January 2.7%), contributed by imported fragrant rice and Basmati rice, which increased by 6.3% (January 6.6%) and 1.0% (January 2.1%) respectively.

The inflation for the expenditure class of milk, other dairy products and eggs registered an increase of 2.3% in February (January 2.5%).

The slower increase was recorded by expenditure item of powdered milk at negative 0.8% (negative 0.4% in January).

The inflation for the expenditure class of meat increased slower to 0.5% in February (January 1.4%) with chicken as its largest component comprising 32.6%, recording a decline of negative 0.7% as against 0.8% in January.

The average price of standard chicken in Malaysia was RM10.29 per kg compared with RM10.33 per kg in February 2023 and January this year.

Inflation for the expenditure class of vegetables registered a decline to negative 0.8% (January 2.2%) due to stable supply and low demand, Bernama reported.

Among the vegetables that showed a decline were cucumber, mustard, tomato and green spinach. Meanwhile, garlic and big red onions increased by 28.5% and 22.6% respectively.

Malaysia's 1.8% inflation rate was lower than Vietnam 4.0%, Philippines' 3.4%, the United States' 3.2%, South Korea's 3.1% and Indonesia's 2.8%, but higher than China's 0.7%) and Thailand's negative 0.8%.