

Malaysia Kini : Record oil prices - consumers held to ransom

Written by Administrator

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The minister of Domestic Trade and Consumers Affairs has announced that we will be having a fuel price increase in the near future. In our recent memorandum to the government on the national energy agenda, we have outlined the importance of alternative choices to consumers. It is also important that the consumers know the actual oil reserve status in the country, as for the past few years we have been informed that the reserves will last 10 to 15 years without change

Countries like Brazil is far ahead in utilisation of alternative fuel such as ethanol to reduce the impact to their country's economy and reducing the burden to the consumers (ethanol is much cheaper). Our biofuel is yet to make changes in fuel consumption for domestic use. In addition to that, the national automotive industry is not moving towards such efforts as well. What choices consumers left with to alter their fuel consumption pattern? The public transport system is not exactly the pride of the nation with limited or inadequate accessibility outside Klang Valley. To assist reduction of fuel consumption is in reduction of traffic flow by introducing better public transport system. It is highly dangerous to depend on our public transport system to arrive to the destination on time. We do see individuals leaving two to three hours earlier than their working hours to beat the inefficiencies and they leave work very late too. Can we expect everyone to do this?

Some of us say that we cannot have transport system like Singapore as our country is much bigger. But Japan is larger than Malaysia and their public transport system is a boon to consumers. Fomca urges the government to assist consumers to obtain alternative fuel source. Holding consumers at ransom every time there is a fuel hike is not a good solution.