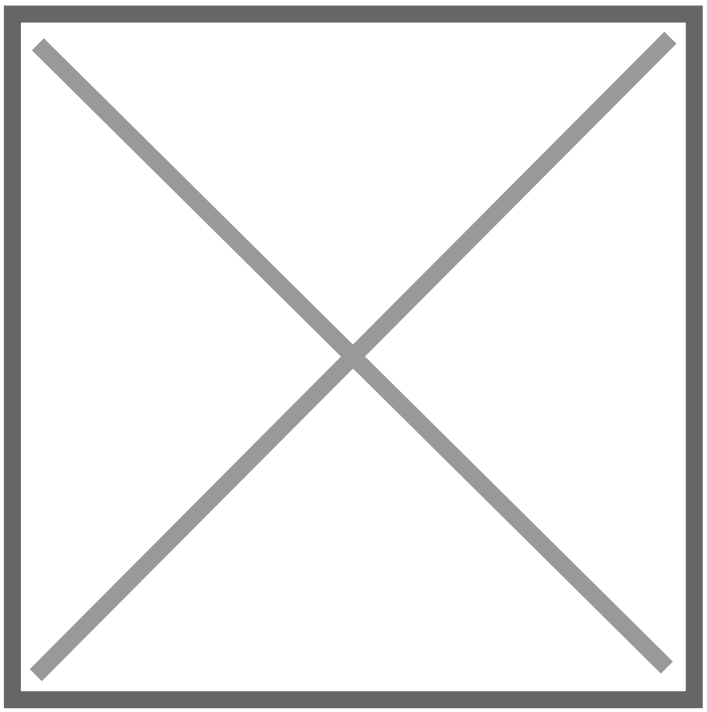
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Malaysiaâ??s consumer landscape shifts as coconut prices soar while rice offers rare relief amid cooling inflation

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In a striking portrait of Malaysiaâ??s evolving cost-of-living landscape, grated coconut â?? a cherished staple woven deeply into the nationâ??s culinary heritage â?? has emerged as the most dramatically appreciating household commodity of the year, while local white rice delivered a welcome measure of relief to consumers amid moderating inflationary pressures.



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Fresh figures released by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) reveal that the average price of grated coconut surged by an astonishing 37.9 percent in 2025, the steepest increase recorded among 125 monitored food items and daily necessities.

The beloved kitchen essential ascended from RM8.33 per kilogram in 2024 to RM11.49 in 2025, a dramatic rise emblematic of broader supply pressures rippling through regional agricultural markets.

Close behind in the procession of rising essentials stood fresh coconut milk, which advanced by 33.1 percent, while lemons, barramundi fish, and imported red apples likewise registered notable upward movements, reflecting shifting production costs, climate-related disruptions, and changing patterns of consumer demand.

Yet amid these ascending prices, one staple commodity descended in dramatic counterpoint.

Malaysiaâ??s locally produced white rice â?? known commercially as Super Special Tempatan 5 per cent (SST 5 per cent) â?? recorded the most substantial price decline of the year, falling by 18.9 per cent. The average price of a 10-kilogram bag retreated from RM36.50 to RM29.61, offering households a rare and meaningful reprieve at a time when food affordability remains a central public concern.

Additional declines were observed in birdâ??s eye chillies, henâ??s eggs, and seedless watermelons, suggesting that selective improvements in agricultural supply chains and domestic production may be easing pressure on several essential food categories.

These developments unfolded against the backdrop of a broader moderation in national inflation. According to DOSMâ??s annual Consumer Price Index analysis, Malaysiaâ??s overall inflation rate softened to 1.4 percent in 2025, down from 1.8 percent in 2024, signaling a gradual stabilization in consumer prices after years of regional and global economic turbulence.

Beyond the nationâ??s markets and grocery aisles, service-sector costs also edged upward. Dental extraction recorded the sharpest increase among monitored service categories, climbing by 4.6 percent, while menâ??s haircuts posted a more modest yet noticeable rise.

The contrasting trajectories of coconut and rice prices illuminate the intricate choreography of Malaysiaâ??s modern economy â?? one shaped simultaneously by agricultural realities, international commodity flows, domestic policy interventions, and the enduring rhythms of household consumption.

For consumers, the year has delivered a paradoxical landscape: premium costs for traditional tropical staples alongside unexpected affordability in one of the nationâ??s most essential foods.

For policymakers and industry observers alike, the figures offer a nuanced signal that while inflationary pressures may be easing in aggregate, the lived experience of pricing remains uneven across categories central to everyday life.

As Malaysia advances through 2026, the delicate balance between affordability, supply resilience, and consumer confidence will remain at the heart of the nationâ??s economic narrative â?? a story written not only in markets and statistics, but in kitchens, dining tables, and the daily rituals of millions.