



## Agriculture Minister Amran Angered by Thousands of Tons of Illegal Food Commodities in Karimun

**Minister of Agriculture, Andi Amran Sulaiman asked law enforcement officers in the Riau Islands to track down the main perpetrators of illegal food commodity smuggling attempts into Indonesia.**

Minister of Agriculture Amran asked the Task Force of Headquarters, Regional Police, TNI, Prosecutor's Office, Customs and Excise, and Quarantine, in accordance with the direction of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, to take firm action against perpetrators of food crimes. Amran emphasized that the country will not be defeated by a handful of individuals who damage trust and disrupt the food self-sufficiency that has been achieved. "We will protect farmers, protect food, and protect the nation. There will be no tolerance for illegal practices like this," he explained when confirmed during his visit to Batam on Monday (January 19, 2025).

He conveyed this after visiting the Tanjung Balai Karimun Customs Warehouse and seeing piles of food commodities in the form of rice, sugar, shallots, garlic, and chilies which were the result of captures from May to November 2025. In the action that has been carried out, as many as 10 units of ships transporting food commodities were also successfully secured and are currently still at the Tanjung Balai Karimun Customs port. From the arrests made, law enforcement officers managed to secure 1,450,700 tons of rice, 96,800 tons of sugar, 67,218 tons of shallots, 44,640 tons of garlic, 7,840 tons of onions, 5,070 tons of dried chilies, and 1,675 tons of peanuts.

"This cannot be allowed to happen. We are already self-sufficient, with national rice stocks exceeding 3 million tons. This is disrupting our farmers, the 115 million Indonesians who depend on agriculture for their livelihood," he explained. In this regard, Amran reminded that quarantine violations are not a matter of volume or economic value, but rather concern the risk of the entry of diseases and pests that could destroy the national agricultural and livestock sectors. Amran also cited the case of the introduction of foot and mouth disease (FMD) several years ago, which caused losses of up to IDR 135 trillion due to the deaths of millions of livestock.

Based on the results of the preliminary investigation, the secured food commodities will be transported by ship from the FTZ area of Tanjung Pinang City, to production center areas such as South Sumatra Province and Riau Province. "Imagine, rice is being shipped from areas without rice paddies to areas with surpluses. This must be thoroughly investigated, down to the roots. It shouldn't just stop at the actors in the field," he said. (Nando)