

Seven consumer items to have similar prices with peninsula

BY CHOK SIM YEE ON JUNE 28, 2019, FRIDAY AT 10:05 AM



Saifuddin (centre) presents a souvenir to Shafie (right) after the courtesy call.

KOTA KINABALU: The federal government has allocated close to RM45 million for 'Community Drumming' programme in Sabah this year to ensure the people, especially rural communities, could enjoy essential items at the same price as West Malaysia.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution bin Ismail said the government would absorb the transportation costs for seven consumer items, including flour, cooking oil, sugar, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders, diesel and petrol.

He said the programme involved more than 700 points of sales in 66 zones in Sabah and had been implemented since April.

"The programme is a continuous commitment of the federal government through my ministry to ensure essential items can be enjoyed as the same price as West Malaysia.

"The higher price of goods is caused by transportation costs.

"When we absorb the transportation costs, it will benefit the people," he said to the media after paying a courtesy call on Chief Minister Datuk Seri Panglima Shafie Apdal here yesterday.

Saifuddin said the effectiveness in the distribution system very much depended on the efficiency and capability of the appointed contractors.

As such, he said Shafie had emphasized on the need to monitor the performance of the contractors.

Saifuddin added that he would return to meet Shafie after three months of the implementation of the programme to determine if there were any complaints or supply shortage that caused price hikes.

“If that happens it would defeat the purpose of carrying out this programme.”

On another note, he said the courtesy call included discussion on the need for the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry and the state government led by Shafie, who is also the chairman of the State Security Council, on measures to overcome or reduce the smuggling of subsidized items such as LPG cylinders, cooking oil, sugar and flour, to neighbouring countries, particularly Indonesia.

“We have discussed a few suggestions and the Chief Minister has agreed to raise the matter at the State Cabinet meeting and National Security Council.”

Saifuddin said he had also informed Shafie on the sufficient supply of 1kg polybag cooking oil for Sabah’s consumption with the appointment of repackaging companies.

“The Chief Minister has requested the ministry to conduct scheduled and frequent monitoring to prevent supply disruption and price hike.

“He has also praised the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry for the measures taken to ensure controlled pricing and no supply shortage during the recent festive celebrations, including the Gawai and Harvest Festival periods in Sarawak and Sabah.”

