

Ministry sets 9 price controlled items for Aidilfitri, 11 for Gawai

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KUCHING: The Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) has set ceiling prices in Sarawak for nine types of goods for Hari Raya Aidilfitri and 11 types for Gawai Dayak.

The ministry said in a press release on Wednesday that the Aidilfitri scheme will run until June 3, while for Gawai Dayak the price scheme will take effect from May 28 to June 3.

Pricing in Sarawak involves 32 areas divided into five key zones with price differences determined by the respective geographical factors, logistics, and supply sources.

"Apart from that, the pricing of goods is also made in accordance with the current market price, taking into account the factors of price change, particularly for imported goods, which are influenced by prices from the country of origin, changes in currency exchange rates, and increased cost of livestock utilities.

"These goods have high demand by the consumers who celebrate the respective celebrations, and that is why price control is placed on these goods to stabilise the prices and supplies in the market," said the ministry.

For Aidilfitri, the price controlled items are live chicken; standard chicken (slaughtered and cleaned with leg, head, liver, and gizzard or any part thereof); super chicken (slaughtered and cleaned without feet, head, liver, and gizzard); imported beef; Grade A chicken eggs (weighing between 65 and 69.9 grams); B-grade chicken eggs (weighing between 60 and 64.9 grams); C-grade chicken eggs (weighing between 55 and 59.9 grams); coconut (wholesaler); and grated coconut (retailer).

For Gawai Dayak, the price controlled items are live chicken; standard chicken (slaughtered and cleaned with leg, head, liver, and gizzard or any part thereof); super chicken (slaughtered and cleaned without feet, head, liver, and gizzard); live spent chicken; chicken wings; Grade A chicken eggs (weighing between 65 and 69.9 grams); B-grade chicken eggs (weighing between 60 and 64.9 grams); C-grade chicken eggs (weighing between 55 and 59.9 grams); pork belly; lean pork and fats; live pigs (farms).

The ministry said wholesale and retail maximum prices are done according to the justification and suitability for effective price control enforcement to ensure reasonable prices for the benefit of consumers and traders.

To curb unreasonable price hikes by unscrupulous traders, KPDNHEP said notices under Section 21 of the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011 will be enforced on any party found to suddenly increase the prices of goods.

"Action will be taken against traders who fail to comply with the regulations of the scheme under the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011 and may be subject to the following penalties, which are the offences in selling controlled goods above maximum price," said the ministry.

Individuals can be fined up to RM100,000, or imprisoned for up to three years, or both, or issued compounds up to RM50,000; whereas companies can be fined up to RM500,000 or compounded up to RM250,000.

“For failure to place pink price tag on controlled items, the individual can be fined up to RM10,000 or compounded up to RM5,000; and for companies — RM20,000 or compounded up to RM10,000,” added the statement.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry together with a total of 183 KPDNHEP enforcement personnel throughout Sarawak will inspect markets, farmers' markets, and supermarkets.

“Traders must adhere to the instructions and be ethical, whereas consumers should know their responsibilities and exercise their rights and are advised not to make excessive purchases that could put pressure on the prices of goods,” said KPDNHEP.

The ministry also reminded wholesalers and retailers not to suddenly hike prices once price control schemes have ended.

Any business found to have unfairly increased prices and exceeded their profit margin will have strict action taken against them under Section 14 of the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011.

Individuals can be fined up to RM100,000, or sentenced to jail for up to three years, or both, while companies or corporate bodies can be fined up to RM500,000.

Complaints can be channeled via the ministry's hotline on 1-800-886-800, the KPDNHEP consumer complaints portal at <http://e-aduan.kpdnhep.gov.my>, via WhatsApp (019-2794317), or visiting the nearest KPDNHEP office.

KPDNHEP Sarawak operations rooms are open from 8am to 6pm and can be contacted on 082-466052 (Kuching); 083-323836 (Sri Aman); 084-657751 (Sarikei); 084-329202 (Sibu); 084-799678 (Kapit); 086-332176 (Bintulu); 085-412862 (Miri); 085-217414 (Limbang); 084-872726 (Mukah); or 085-283650 (Lawas).

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