

In-demand pork, spent chicken on Gawai price control list — Nanta

BY SAMUEL AUBREY ON MAY 28, 2020, THURSDAY AT 12:01 AM



Nanta (second right) explains the purpose of the pink price tag to Manyin (right) during the walkabout at Serian Market, as John (left) and Sagah (third right) look on. — Photo by Chimon Upon

SERIAN: The Dayak community has been assured that pork and spent chicken remain as price-controlled items under the Festive Season Maximum Price Control Scheme (SHMMP) for Gawai Dayak.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Alexander Nanta Linggi said the government is aware that these two items are very much in demand for Gawai even during this Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) period.

As such, he said pork and spent chicken are only included as specific items in the SHMMP for Gawai to prevent profiteering by traders.

"We do not control the prices of pork during other festivities. But for Gawai Dayak, we know this particular item will be much more demanded. So we put the price control on pork and also on spent chicken. Only in Sarawak do we put the price control on 'ayam pence' or chicken which has gotten old and normally not bought by the people.

"It (spent chicken) is very much demanded during Gawai because the Dayaks use it to cook 'ayam pansuh' (chicken cooked in bamboo) which is a Gawai delicacy. In markets in rural areas, this is very much demanded," he told a press conference after a walkabout in Serian Market yesterday.

The SHMMP for Gawai takes effect from today until June 3.

The price-controlled items for Gawai 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 grammes); B-grade chicken eggs (weighing between 60 and 64.9 grammes); C-grade chicken eggs (weighing between 55 and 59.9 grammes); pork belly; lean pork and fat; and live pigs (farms).

Eleven more items were also recently added to list, namely tomatoes; imported round cabbage (from Indonesia and China, excluding Beijing); red chilli; green capsicum; onions (China); onions (Holland); potatoes (China); dried chilli; groundnuts; and fish namely 'kembung' (including mabung) and 'selayang'.

Nanta said 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.

"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 tags on controlled items, the offender can be fined up to RM10,000 or issued compounds up to RM5,000; and for companies — RM20,000 or compound up to RM10,000," he said.

Statistics released to the media yesterday by the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) showed there were 16 cases of offences recorded statewide under this Act during the SHMMP for the just concluded Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration.

A total RM25,500 in compounds were issued for those offences – four cases of traders selling beyond the ceiling price, and 12 cases for not displaying price tags.

Nanta also said during his walkabout, he was assured by traders at the market of sufficient supply of essential items for the Gawai festive season in Serian.

He also praised several of the traders who were selling items at lower than the average price, which he said indicates their ethical way of trading.

On another matter, Nanta assured there will be enough food for the country amid concerns over disruption to the supply lines caused by the possible second wave of Covid-19 cases.

Taking rice supply as an example, he said Malaysia is going to import it from Myanmar and Thailand since Vietnam is reported to have stopped exporting rice during the pandemic.

"Don't worry. I want to take this opportunity to assure the people. We have been monitoring the situation closely to ensure enough supply of food if the pandemic is to go on.

"KPDNHEP, Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Miti) and the Agriculture and Food Industries Ministry are working together as a cluster for food security for the country."

Among those who accompanied Nanta during his market walkabout were Minister of Education, Science and Technological Research Dato Sri Michael Manyin Jawong; Assistant Minister of Agriculture, Native Land and Regional Development Datuk Roland Sagah Wee Inn; Assistant Minister of Transport Datuk Dr Jerip Susil; Assistant Minister of Youth and Sports Datuk Snowdan Lawan; and state assemblymen Martin Ben (Kedup) and John Ilus (Bukit Semuja).

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