

RM308,500 in compounds issued in recent price control scheme

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KUALA PILAH: The Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry (KPDNHEP) issued compounds amounting to RM308,500 during the enforcement of the Festive Season Maximum Price Scheme (SHMMP) in conjunction with Hari Raya Puasa, Pesta Kaamatan and Hari Gawai celebrations which ended Wednesday.

The ministry's enforcement director Datuk Iskandar Halim Sulaiman said they involved 147 cases including four wholesalers for various offences including selling goods above the ceiling prices.

"This amount includes a new case in Kuala Lumpur involving a chicken wholesaler that traded exceeding the maximum price and was compounded RM50,000. We are taking strict action by raising the compound rates,"

• he told reporters after a price survey at the Kuala Pilah market and Giant supermarkets here today.

Also present were the ministry's enforcement deputy director (Management) Azman Adam and Negeri Sembilan KPDNHEP Director Ain Arjuna Aziz Zaman.

Iskandar said compounds collected this year is also higher compared to last year's scheme which was RM46,550 involving 362 cases.

"This is due to the increase in the compound rate which is RM1,000 minimum compared to between RM100 and RM200 previously for failing to display price tags. While the compound for selling goods above the ceiling prices offences is between RM2,500 to RM5,000 for retailers compared to RM250 previously and maximum RM50,000 for wholesalers compared to RM5,000 previously.

"The increase in the compound rate was done so that they won't take advantage. Else, we will mete out heavier penalty," he said. He explained that taking action was not the main goal of the ministry, but only applied to those committing offences.

Meanwhile, he added that post-SHMMP nationwide surveys saw a rise in the prices of chicken of up to RM8.50 compared to RM7.50 during the scheme.

"We will investigate this. Today, for instance, we found a chicken wholesaler raising the price by 50 sen per kg from RM6.20 to RM6.70 to retailers which led the retailers to sell it at over RM8 per kg.

"We will investigate the reason for the price hike if it is due to the breeders and we want to know the reason. We did expect a price hike because during the 15 days of SHMMP implementation, many retailers and wholesalers complained about their affected profit margins," he said.

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<http://english.astroawani.com/malaysia-news/rm308-500-compounds-issued-recent-price-control-scheme-245786>