

No increase in prices, traders warned

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Vidyananthan (left) checking on traders at the Larkin market.

JOHOR BARU: Traders, wholesalers and manufacturers have been warned not to increase prices of goods and items during the Hari Raya Aidilfitri season.

Health and environment committee chairman R. Vidyananthan said some of the items which were in demand during the period include sugar, cooking oil, flour, rice, eggs, fresh chicken and vegetables.

"So far, until May 17, some 4,008 premises were checked statewide to prevent traders from raising prices," he said, adding that this included 3,486 traders, 397 wholesalers and 125 manufacturers.

"Our checks show that there is enough food supply for the Raya season and no reason to increase prices," he said, adding that 55 notices were issued to traders selling chicken for increasing prices.

He stressed that individuals caught hiking prices face a maximum fine of RM100,000 or three years imprisonment while companies face a fine of between RM500,000 and RM1mil.

Vidyanathan, who visited Larkin market to check on the situation, said he was satisfied that all the traders were adhering to rules, including displaying prices and keeping their prices within the permitted level.

The visit came about following a report in StarMetro about the prices of vegetables shooting up due to the rainy season and that consumers were upset.

They had said traders must not simply increase prices, especially with Raya fast approaching.

In the report, it was stated that vegetable farms in Tangkak and parts of Cameron Highlands had been affected by floods over the past few weeks, resulting in an increase in the price of vegetables but traders refuted this, saying they were not simply increasing the prices and that their profit margin had dropped.

Vidyanathan said a total of 200 enforcement personnel were dispatched to keep tabs on the prices of items statewide.

He urged the public to help by being their "eyes and ears" and alert the authorities if they find any trader increasing prices.

Those with complaints can contact the call centre at 1-800-886800, enforcement hotline at 07-227 2811, WhatsApp to 019-279 4317 or alternatively send an email to e-aduan@kpdnhep.gov.my.

On staying safe during Hari Raya, he advised the public to sanitise their homes, frequently wash their hands and use hand sanitiser.

"Do not go to crowded places or gather as a big group. Practise social distancing at all times," he said.

Vidyanathan said as at May 18, a total of 1,982 public places had been sanitised statewide to contain the spread of Covid-19.

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