

KPDNHEP denies late enforcement on necessary items



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by AFIQ AZIZ/ pic by RAZAK GHAZALI

DOMESTIC Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry (KPDNHEP) denied claims that lack of inter-ministry communication and delayed enforcement have resulted in sudden increase in prices of necessary items.

Minister Datuk Alexander Nanta Linggi said KPDNHEP, and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industries (MoA), together with the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) have been tactful in ensuring the supplies of basic items, especially food supplies, are sufficient at controlled prices.

"We are not behind (in the enforcement). Since the first week of the Movement Control Order (MCO), we, at the inter-ministry levels, have been working together to ensure that supply chains from supplier, distributors, wholesalers and retailers are protected," Nanta Linggi told the press after a site visit to a grocer in Kajang, Selangor, yesterday.

The minister said this in response to a statement made by former MoA Minister Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub, who alleged that the increase in chicken and vegetable prices was due to lack of ministerial cooperation and late enforcement.

Nanta Linggi, however, said a Cabinet Committee on Food Security comprising MoA, MITI and KPDNHEP meets regularly to ensure food supplies are available and affordable in the market.

“In fact during MCO, the prices fell too low because of lesser consumption. However, as consumption goes up due to the upcoming festivals, we have found that this will lead to price hikes.

“This is why we started the implementation of the festive season maximum price control scheme (SHMMP) on Tuesday,” he added.

The scheme lists a total of 11 types of Hari Raya Aidilfitri essential goods under the SHMMP for 15 days beginning yesterday to June 3. For the Kaamatan Festival in Sabah, the seven-day price control exercise will begin on May 28 to June 3, also involving 11 types of goods.

For Gawai celebration in Sarawak, the government has set a ceiling price for 12 types of goods within the same period.

On the first day of SHMMP, a KPDNHEP enforcer issued a compound against a trader for selling 1kg of chicken at RM9, RM1.50 higher than the capped price under the scheme.

Nanta Linggi said the ministry will also consider adding more items into the control basket during the SHMMP period, especially on food items.

“We started with only 11 items, but it can go up to 35 items during those periods.

“It will be added from time to time based on the necessities as we also need to be fair to the traders,” he added.

Nanta Linggi said the scheme will not be prolonged, as this year’s festivities will be less merrier compared to last year due to the MCO.

Last year, the same scheme was implemented with an additional 15 days, bringing the total to 30 days of SHMMP programme.

Twenty-seven items were placed in the control basket during the one-month implementation.

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