

'No hike in cement price'

Govt's plans to build affordable homes will be jeopardised

By JOSEPH KAOS Jr
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PUTRAJAYA: There will be no increase in the price of cement, ending speculation of a possible 40% to 50% hike in the price.

The government will also be finalising the mechanism of the targeted fuel subsidy scheme by this month, after weeks of meetings with various stakeholders on the matter.

Both were announced by Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail yesterday.

Saifuddin said he had meetings with industry players to discuss cement prices after talk was rife that cement manufacturers wanted a price change due to rising costs.

"Cement is a controlled item and any sort of price change without the ministry's approval will be an offence under the Control of Supplies Act 1961, and action can be

taken against industry players. "But we are a government that listens. So we allowed them to air their views and we, in turn, explained our position."

"An increase in the price of cement, however, will be ultimately decided by the Cabinet, he added. Saifuddin said the ministry held numerous meetings with oil compa-

ny players are encouraged to comply with the guidelines and produce quality window tint films that have Strim Bhd certification. "We want to get dealers to sell tint films that comply with Malaysian Standard MS2669: 2017. By July 2020, it will be made mandatory for shops to only sell certified tint films," he said.

The move, he added, was to get rid of low-quality and substandard tint films available in the market, which had been the bane of many car owners.

ment would be detrimental to the government's plans to build one million affordable homes for the people.

"Following our discussions, all parties agreed not to increase the price of cement," he said.

On the targeted fuel subsidy scheme, Saifuddin said a meeting between his ministry and the Finance Ministry would be held this month.

"This meeting will finalise all things related to the implementation of the scheme such as policy, financial implication, data, the process and so on.

"This includes the question of whether we will maintain a ceiling price for fuel or remove it altogether," he said.

The implementation date of the scheme, however, will be ultimately decided by the Cabinet, he added.

Saifuddin said the ministry held numerous meetings with oil compa-

nies, petrol station dealers and consumer groups to gather feedback on the proposed scheme.

Announced in Budget 2019, the targeted fuel subsidy scheme is meant to help the B40 group cope with the rising cost of goods.

Earlier, Saifuddin launched guidelines on vehicle window tinting standards.

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