

Prospective investors approach ministry to operate sugar refineries

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KUCHING: Several prospective investors have approached the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry (KPDNHEP), as the country's regulating body for sugar supply, over their interest in operating sugar refineries, said its deputy minister, Chong Chieng Jen (pix).

He said these interested parties were willing to invest in upgrading the supply system following claims by MSM Malaysia Holdings Bhd (MSM) that it might shut down due to loss making sugar refinery plants.

"These interested (domestic) parties, who have approached us, are also willing to make the system more efficient towards providing cheaper supply of sugar from these plants, all located in Peninsular Malaysia at present.

"So far, MSM has not approach my ministry so that we can arrange a meeting with the prospective investors, instead of suffering a total loss and closing down its plants," he told reporters after attending the ministry's Ramah Tamah Gawai Raya 2019 event at the KPDNHEP office, here today.

MSM had claimed that the issuance of import APs for all the Sarawak food and beverage (F&B) manufacturers would adversely affect its performance.

Chong had previously announced the ministry's new policy of allowing Sarawak F&B manufacturers to import sugar from overseas.

They are now getting their sugar supply from Thailand at RM1.70 per kg, inclusive of transport charges.

This is compared to RM2.70 per kg and, at times, even at a higher price from MSM and Central Sugar Refinery Sdn Bhd (CSR).

On Sarawak KPDNHEP's enforcement of the Festive Season Price Control Scheme in conjunction with Aidilfitri and Gawai Dayak, Chong was happy to note, there had been no complaints received so far against traders in the state for non-compliance.

The scheme was in force from May 25 – June 7 for Gawai and May 21– June 19 for Aidilfitri under the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011. — *Bernama*

