

## Saifuddin: No one can ascertain if boycott pushes down price of goods



Domestic Trade and Consumerism Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail speaks to reporters after the handing-over ceremony of 14 chiller trucks to Malaysia Food Bank Foundation and the ministry's state directors in Putrajaya. -NSTP/Mohd Fadli Hamzah

By Azura Abas  
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**PUTRAJAYA:** The Domestic Trade and Consumerism Ministry said no one could verify if prices of some goods, including cooking oil, dropped following a boycott urging Muslim consumers to buy only Muslim products.

Its Minister, Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail said if the price at the source is lowered, then the retail price would be too.

"I have commented on this numerous times. Retail prices are based on the supply and demand concept. No one can verify it (that the boycott pushes down prices of some goods)," he told reporters after the handing-over ceremony of 14 chiller trucks to Malaysia Food Bank Foundation and the ministry's state directors.

Saifuddin, who is also the PKR secretary-general, added that he would leave it to market forces to determine the prices of goods.

It was reported recently that there was a campaign on social media by certain quarters to boycott goods produced by non-Muslims.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had commented on such a call, disagreeing to it and describing the move as one by those with shallow thinking.

Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng had also urged Umno and Pas to condemn the boycott.

On PKR vice-president Zuraida Kamaruddin's persistent request to have a private meeting with the party president, Saifuddin said there was no need for such a meeting now.

Instead, he said, party leaders, including Zuraida, could still meet Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim during party meetings, including at the Political Bureau and party's central leadership council meetings.

Zuraida had wanted to meet Anwar for "peace talks" to resolve internal party problems and had sent three letters to the PKR president regarding issues affecting the party.

Saifuddin said he had been instructed by the party president to reply to all the letters Zuraida had sent.

"Anwar has guided me by giving pointers on how to respond to the letters and the replies have been hand delivered to the sender. I have also attached the schedule of meetings just in case anyone forgets.

"For now, we keep it that way. Anwar is a leader for all and not a leader to certain factions or to entertain (the needs of) certain factions. This is very unhealthy for the party and also for any organisation. Anwar must stay above and be accepted as the president of a party which holds the most number of seats (in Parliament)."

