

Sugar price to drop by 10 sen per kg from Sept 1 — minister

PUTRAJAYA: The price of sugar will be lower by 10 sen per kg effective Sept 1 in line with the fall in sugar prices in the world market, Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Saifuddin Nasution Ismail said yesterday.

The new retail price of coarse sugar will be RM2.85 per kg and that of fine sugar will be RM2.95 per kg, he told a press conference after the monthly gathering of the ministry here.

He said similar measures were being adopted in neighbouring countries like Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand, and added that

the price of sugar in Malaysia was among the lowest in the region. "The government is also concerned about the cost of living which, among others, is contributed by a rise in the prices of essential goods," he said.

Saifuddin said it is hoped that the drop in the price of sugar would have a multiplier effect on the prices of food and drinks in the market. He said the price of sugar was revised the last time on March 1, 2017, rising 11 sen to RM2.95 per kg.

The drop in the price of sugar did not mean that the government supported the consumption of more sugar, he said, and added that it was

hoped that the people would continue to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

In 2016, he said, 3.6 million people, or 17.5% of the population aged 18 and above, were diabetic and the number could continue to rise unless preventive measures were adopted.

"[The] intake of sugar at a reasonable rate can not only save a person from illness, but also the routine can [be a] saving in daily expenses," he said. Saifuddin also announced the government's decision to restructure several ministries, saying four agencies under his ministry — namely the Cooperatives Commission of

Malaysia, Cooperative College of Malaysia, Bank Rakyat and Perbadanan Nasional Bhd — would be placed under the entrepreneur development ministry.

"Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad conveyed the decision to me in writing ... this move is effective from the date of the letter, which was several days ago," he said.

Saifuddin said his ministry would retain three agencies, namely the Companies Commission of Malaysia, Intellectual Property Corp of Malaysia and the Competition Commission of Malaysia. — *Bernama*