The Star

Assurance on sugar supply

By REMAR NORDIN

Aid for the people: Salahuddin handing over a Bakul Rahmah at the Pulai MP's Hari Raya open house in Johor Baru.

JOHOR BARU: An action plan is in place in the event that global sugar prices change, so that people can continue to get their supply, says Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub.

The Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Minister said despite the price increase of raw sugar and natural gas globally, the government, through four ministries, would ensure that the people could continue to buy sugar at an affordable price.

He said besides his ministry, the others are the Economy Ministry, the Investment, Trade, and Industry Ministry, and the Finance Ministry.

"The four ministries have been tasked with ensuring Malaysia has a sufficient and sustainable supply of sugar.

"Recently, there has been speculation about a lack of sugar supply, which is false," he told reporters at the Pulai Hari Raya open house yesterday.

Salahuddin was asked to comment on a picture of premium white sugar in green packaging priced at RM4.60 per kg.

The Pulai MP said they had met two sugar manufacturing companies – MSM Malaysia Holdings Berhad and Central Sugar Refinery Sdn Bhd (CSR) – with both giving their assurance that the supply was enough.

"We met MSM and CSR on Friday.

"This is the third time that we have discussed the matter.

"There is no such issue as a lack of sugar supply," he said.

"If sugar companies wish to introduce a new product, they must get the green light from the ministry first," he added.

Asked whether the ministry had received any report on the lack of sugar supply, Salahuddin said there were a few cases that had been resolved.

"We received reports from a few shops in Langkawi but we have sent enough supply there," he said.

Salahuddin also said that the current fixed retail price for a kilo of sugar remains at RM2.85 for raw sugar and RM2.95 for refined sugar.

On another matter, the minister said the central database hub (Padu) has been given until the end of the year to streamline all data related to the implementation of targeted fuel subsidies for RON95 petrol and diesel.

He said the implementation is expected to begin next year and that the government would use the given time to ensure there is no loophole.

"We need to make sure this will reach those who are targeted.

"The National Economic Action Council agreed to hand over the coordination task to Padu," he said.

On Monday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the government would implement a target subsidy programme in stages.

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