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Govt gives green light to production of clear refined white sugar

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Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Minister Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub delivers his speech during the ministry's Excellent Service Award Ceremony in Putrajaya. -NSTP/MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

PUTRAJAYA: The government has allowed two local sugar producing companies, MSM Malaysia Holdings Bhd and Central Sugars Refinery Sdn Bhd (CSR), to produce clear refined white sugar, effective today.

Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Minister Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub said the approval would give consumers a choice of sugar, besides the coarse and fine refined white sugar, which had been described as "people's sugar".

He stressed that the sale of clear refined white sugar could not replace the existing supply of white sugar, and the company would face action if it did not produce enough of supply of white sugar.

The government had instructed MSM and CSR to continue producing refined white sugar at the current quantity of 42,000 tonnes per month, he said after attending the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry's Excellent Service Award Ceremony here today.

"The people do not need to be upset and panic, the people's sugar is still in the market," he said.

He then gave an assurance that the production of clear refined white sugar would not affect the existing supply of sugar.

Warnings had also been given to wholesalers and retailers who imposed conditional purchases or did not sell existing white sugar to customers, he said.

Salahuddin said Op Manis would be carried out again for a month starting today to ensure that the production of clear filtered white sugar did not affect the price and supply of white sugar available in the market.

The current price of refined white sugar controlled by the government is RM2.85 per kilogramme (coarse) and RM2.95 per kilogramme (refined), set under the Supply Control Act 1961.

Asked if the clear refined white sugar belongs to the premium sugar category, Salahuddin said it was up to the company to label it, and, most importantly, it was not sold at a high price.

"The price of that sugar (clear refined white sugar) is not controlled by the government, instead it is determined by the market," he said.— BERNAMA

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