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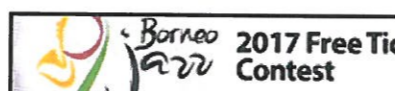
Sarawak

Coffeeshop operators likely to maintain price of drinks

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Teo Giat Liew

KUCHING: Coffeeshop operators here are not likely to increase their prices just because of the recent hike in sugar prices.

Chairman of Kuching Coffee Shops and Restaurants Owners Association, Teo Giat Liew, said the impact of the sugar price hike could not be greater than the weakening Ringgit.

"Coffeeshop operators have been absorbing the increasing costs and this is not the first time the price of sugar goes up. There has been a spate of

price hikes for sugar in the last couple of months.

"What's more, the price of coffee powder has increased by RM2 per kg. And most coffee shop operators are absorbing the additional cost," he said when contacted yesterday.

He was prompted for comments with regard to the recent 11sen hike for sugar, making it now RM2.95 per kg.

According to Teo, most coffee powder used by coffee shop operators here were currently priced between RM18 and RM20 per kg.

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He said the government ought to come up with some sorts of measures to slow down inflation and boost the declining economy.

He said exco-members of the association would soon sit down for a meeting, probably in mid March, to deliberate the means to maintain their customer base.

“In bad times like this, we need to look for ways to keep our customers. We are looking at providing a hygienic and cosy environment to draw the people.

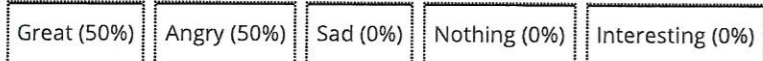
“For as long as you keep your coffee shop clean and comfortable, I don’t think people mind paying 10 or 20 sen more. This is a reason why high end cafes and eateries are still running.”

Teo noted that consumers of today tend to patronise eating outlets which were more hygienic.

“But if your coffeeshop is dirty, people would not want to come even if the drinks are cheap.”

It is believed that there are over 1,000 coffeeshop operators in and around the city. The association has over 400 members.

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