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Hassan-Flour

NEW PRICE OF WHEAT FLOUR MAY BE OUT NEXT WEEK

KUALA LUMPUR, June 4 (Bernama) -- The new price of wheat flour may be announced next week after the Cabinet has considered a report to be submitted by the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry.

Minister Datuk Abu Hassan Omar said today the ministry is in the final stages of studying the supply and price situation of the controlled item and will submit its report to the Cabinet soon.

Asked whether the report may be submitted to the Cabinet at its weekly meeting tomorrow, Abu Hassan said: "Unlikely but, perhaps, next week, and the decision of the Cabinet will then be announced."

He was speaking to reporters at the launching of World Consumer Day 1996 and the Family Comfortable Living Competition at Pusat Islam by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Mahathir told reporters earlier that the government cannot prevent a price rise for wheat flour but it will take measures to ensure the increase will be fair.

Abu Hassan said flour millers had applied to the government to raise the price of wheat flour by 40 sen a kilogramme from the present 80 sen.

"We will study their request and work out a formula to determine the price of wheat flour in future based on the supply and current price of wheat," he said.

Abu Hassan warned millers, wholesalers and retailers not to raise the price of the commodity pending the government's decision.

He also said the Cabinet at its meeting last week directed the Royal Customs and Excise Department to tighten checks to prevent any smuggling of wheat flour out of the country since the price of the commodity in Malaysia is the lowest in the region.

The government would also review the licence conditions of wheat flour dealers who export the product to neighbouring countries, he said.

"We will take stern action against anyone who contravenes his licence conditions," he said in referring to reports of dealers who were more keen to export their flour to take advantage of the higher prices abroad. --

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