

21 JAN 1998

Megat-Gas

PRICE OF COOKING GAS IS THE PRICE AT SHOPS, SAYS MEGAT

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 21 (Bernama) -- Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayob said today the price of cooking gas fixed by the government is the price sold at shops.

He said the price excludes delivery charges when consumers asked for the gas to be sent to their houses.

"Consumers have the choice on whether to ask for delivery or carry the gas cylinders themselves," he told reporters here.

He was commenting on press reports that the Perak Consumers Association (PCA) had filed an application at the Ipoh High Court yesterday for an order requiring the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister to enforce price control on cooking gas.

The application made by PCA president Abdul Rahman Said Alli stated that the price should be controlled since traders charge higher than the price allowed by the government.

The application was made since cooking gas is in the list of controlled items according to the Supply and Control Act 1961 and any price change must be approved by the government.

The price of cooking gas for domestic use is RM14.40 for the 12 cylinder and RM15.75 for the 14kg cylinder.

"It's up to the consumers to decide on whether to have the gas sent to their home," Megat Junid said when explaining that cooking gas was not a price-controlled item but only a controlled item.

He said the ministry's legal adviser might study the affidavit filed by the PCA since it also claimed that the minister failed in his duty.

On Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement that it was unavoidable that the people would have to pay more for essential goods, he said there was truth in it since one side had to suffer losses if the otherwise occur.

The ministry would have to study every aspects including that concerning producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers to ensure no party suffer losses.

He said for now the ministry would identify imported goods, its importers and source to be submitted to the National Economic Action Council (NEAC) which would meet tomorrow.

Earlier, Megat Junid said the ministry decided to implement the self-service system at petrol stations at several locations in seven states this year after its success in the Klang valley.

The system will be implemented in Johor Bahru and Langkawi on April 15, Ipoh and Georgetown, Pulau Pinang (June 1), Kuantan and Seremban municipal councils (Sept 1) and Melaka Municipal Council (Nov 1). -- BERNAMA

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