

# Ministry using navy ships to send sugar to Sabah, S'wak

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry is using navy ships to send sugar to meet the shortage in Sabah and Sarawak.

"I am sending my 'battleships' to Sabah and Sarawak and he (Bandar Kuching MP Chong Chieng Jen) can resign within two weeks (instead)," said Minister Datuk Seri Shafie Apdal.

He was referring to a comment Chong made asking Shafie to resign if he could not solve the six-month-old sugar problem in the two states by November.

Shafie said more than 2,700 tonnes of sugar - allocations from the ministry - in four shipments would be delivered to Sabah and Sarawak by navy vessels.

The first shipment will reach Tawau on Friday.

Shafie described Chong's comments as "silly" and declined to respond further on the matter.

He was speaking to reporters after checking prices of essential food items at the Chow Kit market yesterday.

On prices of the items, he said: "We notice that the market is stable. Some of the items are actually being sold way below (the ceiling price)."

He cited chicken as an example, saying that he was impressed that chicken was sold at between RM5 and RM5.50 per kilo despite the price increase of between 50 sen and 65 sen for broiler chicken.

"They (Chow Kit market traders) are selling at 40 sen to 60 sen below market retail prices," he added.

On the increased prices of chillies, Shafie said the change was seasonal and due to supply and demand.

Shafie urged traders not to mark up prices of their goods exorbitantly during the festive season.

"Consumers can help alert and tip-off our enforcement division if they find traders charging exorbitantly," he said.

Earlier, it was announced that consumers would enjoy controlled pricing on 15 essential food items during the festive period.