

Price hike not caused by traders

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Cost builds up along various stages of supply chain, explains PM

PUTRAJAYA: Although the prices of essential goods have increased, this is not due to the indiscriminate pricing placed by traders, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

He attributed the price hikes to costs accumulated along various levels of the supply chain before the goods reach the traders.

"It's true that daily essentials are more expensive now. Traders and wholesalers are not responsible for the price increase. I see it as the result of the supply chain.

"Take chicken for example. Breeders, factories and wholesalers all have their own costs. The pricing is already high by the time the goods reach the traders," he said.

The Prime Minister, according to Bernama, was speaking to reporters after conducting price checks on essential items at the MyFarm Outlet Kasih here yesterday.

The Agriculture and Food Industries Ministry, he said, needed



Higher cost: Ismail Sabri conducting checks on prices of essential food items at a MyFarm Outlet Kasih Putrajaya. — Bernama

to cooperate with the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry to resolve this issue.

"We (the government) also need to look seriously into the issue of

middlemen involvement," he said.

The government, said Ismail Sabri, would import frozen chicken to enable the people to obtain poultry at a lower price.

"For a start, we will bring in 200 containers," he said, adding that the imported frozen chickens are expected to be in local markets by next week at the latest.

"The increase in chicken prices to RM9.80 per kg is unusual although prices have exceeded RM10 per kg before. But this seldom happens because chicken prices normally range between RM7 and RM8 per kg," he said.

Ismail Sabri said MAFI would also temporarily stop fish exports to ensure that supply, at reasonable prices, is easily available.

"We do not want the people to be burdened, especially for wet goods," he added.

He also said ice manufacturers had no good reason to increase the price of their products.

On the 50 sen increase for a packet of ice, Ismail Sabri said this should not have happened as the government had not increased water and electricity tariffs.

"This situation was unlike that of the hike in bread prices, which was due to the rise in flour prices.

"Our country does not grow wheat; we import flour.

"So, this has an impact on bread price," he said.

Following complaints, Ismail Sabri wants the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry to conduct a thorough study on the factor of production costs.

The people can have the opportunity to buy various consumer items below market price at several places throughout the country today.

The Malaysian Family sale will offer prices around 15% to 20% lower than market prices, said the Domestic and Consumer Affairs Ministry in a statement.

Among the items are standard processed chicken, eggs, fresh and frozen fish and vegetables. Ismail Sabri is slated to launch the programme at Pantai Dalam in Kuala Lumpur.