

# Shahidan: Talks over liquor ban ongoing

ENGAGEMENT with stakeholders on Kuala Lumpur City Hall's (DBKL) plan to ban liquor sales in grocery and convenience stores, sundry shops and Chinese medical halls is still ongoing, says Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim.

The Federal Territories Minister said he would not rush into a decision before meeting with all stakeholders, including representatives from the Opposition.

"We cannot think only of those who are selling liquor, but also those who will buy it.

"The government will respect both Muslims and non-Muslims.

"Let us come up with a win-win solution before deciding," he said in reply to a supplementary question from Teresa Kok (PH-Seputeh) during Minister's Question Time at the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Kok had asked the ministry whether it was willing to enter into a dialogue with owners of grocery and convenience stores, sundry shops and Chinese medical halls who are opposed to DBKL's new guidelines on banning hard liquor sales.

DBKL had postponed the enforcement of the ruling until Oct 31.

In preparing the guidelines, the ministry had engaged with various stakeholders including liquor manufacturing, packaging and sales associations as well as non-governmental organisations, said Shahidan.

He said the objective was to limit access to liquor among Muslims as well as to those below the age of 21.

"Despite the ruling, non-Muslims can still get access to liquor at certain locations in hotels, pubs, bars and dedicated stores selling liquor," he said.