

Consumers advised against panic buying

KUALA LUMPUR: The Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry has urged the public not to panic buy due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Its head of corporate communication, Yunus Tasim, said there was no panic buying and that the situation was under control.

He said images of people supposedly panic buying at a supermarket in Kuching, Sarawak, which went viral on Friday, was not due to Covid-19.

"Our officers carried out an investigation and found out that the supermarket was having a mega sale. Hence large crowds were buying low-priced products and not panic buying due to Covid-19," he told the *New Sunday Times*.

He said the ministry had reminded people not to disseminate false information, which caused panic among the people.

"The public must not easily believe fake news and aggravate matters by sharing unverified news on social media," he said,

adding that the ministry's officers would monitor the situation.

In **Kota Kinabalu**, Sabah Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Office director Georgie Abas said enforcement officers had conducted inspections on 150 retail premises and found that the outlets had sufficient supplies of food and essential items.

Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations president Datuk Dr N. Marimuthu urged the public to heed the advice of the authorities in the wake of the second wave of the novel coronavirus infection.

He said the public should not resort to panic buying, adding that it did not help the situation.

"The Health Ministry has done a good job in tackling the Covid-19 outbreak.

"The people should follow the guidelines issued by the ministry and health experts on personal hygiene practices.

"Buying essential items like toilet papers and kitchen paper towels in bulk will not solve the prob-



People shopping at a supermarket in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

lem. Traders will take advantage of the situation by hiking the prices of these items and there will be a shortage of supplies.

"So panic buying only makes the situation worse."

Consumers' Association of Penang president Mohideen Abdul Kader said there was no need for people to stock up on food and products.

"We notice large crowds in supermarkets and wet markets.

There is no shortage of food. We must face this crisis calmly and with faith. Do not panic.

"Adhere to the measures recommended by our health authorities and the World Health Organisation."