

Manufacturers told to increase face mask production



Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail. --
BERNAMA

By Teh Athira Yusof
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KAJANG: Manufacturers have been told to increase face mask production to meet public demands following the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail said talks were ongoing with both suppliers and manufacturers over the shortage of face masks at store shelves.

"People are taking steps to prevent infection from the outbreak by using hand sanitisers and face masks.

"Based on the report that we received from the manufacturers, current face mask supply was insufficient to meet with the increasing demand. The ministry will request for more.

"Also due to the Chinese New Year break, manufacturers' operations were also slower than usual," he told the media during a press conference at the Tesco 'Buy Malaysian Product' campaign at Tesco Extra Kajang here today.

Saifuddin also said the ministry's enforcement officers had reported "panic purchases" which led to the dwindling supply.

It is found that there has been an increase of 'panic purchase' by the public especially in Johor on products such as face masks and hand sanitisers.

"I would like to assure that the supply (of both products) is enough to prevent any more panic among the people and hope that the public would remain calm," he said.

On Jan 27, the ministry listed face masks as price control items following the outbreak of the coronavirus which has now spread to more than 14 countries.

On Jan 28, Bernama reported that face masks in Johor and Kota Kinabalu were sold out at sundry shops, pharmacies and 24-hour convenience stores.

