

Boycotters of non-Muslim products now say buy Muslim products first



Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail said the groups had "changed their script" after explanations were given through news and other means to the groups on the impact of carrying out such boycotts. - NSTP/RAMDZAN MASIAM

By Mohamed Basyir
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BUTTERWORTH: Groups which initially promoted the boycott non-Muslim products are now singing a different tune.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail said the groups had "changed their script" after explanations were given through news and other means to the groups on the impact of carrying out such boycotts.

"Their thinking changed. First they said boycott and then they changed the script to 'buy Muslim first'. In our context, what we must promote is 'buy Malaysian first'," he said at a press conference today after launching Rumah Ilmu at Telok Air Tawar constituency here today.

The boycott call was allegedly made by Muslim non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that reportedly encouraged consumers to prioritise goods produced by Muslim and Bumiputera companies.

Saifuddin said non-Muslim majority countries were the biggest producers of halal products.

The market for halal products in recent years stood at a trillion USD, he said.

"Because of this, now halal (Syariah compliance) are now expanded to other things including fashion and films," he said.

He said the ministry had been supportive of promoting local products where it imposes a strict 30 per cent local products policy to international brands wanting to open their hypermarkets and supermarkets here.

The foreign companies should also find local partners in order to further boost the sales of local products.

"There are many success stories from this. There are companies earning seven-figure income through these initiatives.

"Without making any 'buy Malay product first' policy the response from the people is good. If we from the ministry instruct them to sell Malay products only then this will be difficult (to achieve)," he added.

