

Minister: Trade groups yet to see signs of non-Muslim business boycott

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Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail speaks during the closing ceremony of the i-Keep Sales Carnival in Kuala Lumpur September 2, 2019. — Picture by Shafwan Zaidon

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 2 — Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution said there has not been any reported effect of the call to boycott halal products sold by non-Muslims.

He said none of the business associations he is contact with as minister has informed him of any noticeable impact from the call.

"So far they have not indicated that the boycott is affecting them," Saifuddin said after officiating the closing ceremony of the i-Keep Sales Carnival in Pantai Dalam.

He expressed his disapproval of the boycott, saying harmony was vital to Malaysia as a multiracial, multicultural, and multireligious country.

"This is especially when it comes to economic dealings, and over matters of national prosperity.

"We should understand, respect and support one another. So if there are campaigns such as this, it becomes more difficult to uphold these values," Saifuddin said.

He added social interdependency meant the best solutions were those that benefited all.

Calls for the boycott originated from the Islamic Consumers Association of Malaysia's suggestion to the Islamic Development Department on August 23, when they said halal certificates should be issued in the native language of the product's manufacturers so that consumers can identify if they are Muslim or otherwise.