

Product boycott won't benefit any party: Saifuddin

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KUALA LUMPUR: The movement to boycott products of non-Bumiputeras brings no benefit to any party, Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail (pic) said.

He said Malaysians by right should be celebrating societal diversity and take advantage of its strengths and benefits, especially with regards to the economy.

"Respect and trust among one another is the key to a nation's economic prosperity.

"It is this trait of supporting one another that has driven the country's economic activities and helped it prosper," he told reporters when met at the i-Keep sales carnival, here, Monday.

There is an ongoing campaign on social media by certain quarters to boycott goods produced by non-Bumiputeras and to buy Bumiputera products instead.

Last Friday, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he did not agree with the movement's call, saying it was only carried out by people with shallow thinking.

Saifuddin, when asked, said he has not received any feedback on whether the boycott campaign had any effect so far.

"No feedback whether it has been successful or not, in fact in our meetings with wholesaler and retailer associations, everything was as usual, nothing on this (boycott) was raised," he said.

Meanwhile, Saifuddin said the working paper on the fuel subsidy scheme for lower income households was ready to be presented to the Cabinet.

"The working paper is ready, and we are ready to present it to the Cabinet. This is a new programme so we need the input of all the Ministers," he said.

Until then, he said the Ministry will keep fine-tuning some of the proposals' aspects, including its mechanism and registration of applicants.

"I cannot speak on behalf of the other ministries or the Cabinet members, but on our part, we have completed the paper," Saifuddin said.

He added that the proposal paper might undergo improvements or amendments, depending on the feedback from the other Cabinet members.

"This is necessary, as we cannot simply carry the proposal outright without input from the others," Saifuddin said.

On Aug 20, the Minister said the subsidy plan is expected to be rolled out within two weeks, subject to Cabinet's advice.

Before that the Ministry had been in discussions with its Finance Ministry counterparts over ironing out issues related to the plan's mechanisms. The plan is part of the Budget 2019 measures announced last year, which aimed to reduce living costs among B40 households.