

'Useless to boycott products'

Saifuddin: Condemning non-Muslim businesses won't benefit anyone

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KUALA LUMPUR: The call to boycott non-Muslim products will not benefit any party, says Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail.

He said Malaysians should celebrate the nation's diversity instead and take advantage of its strength, especially with regard 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 was quoted as saying by Bernama yesterday.

Lately, there has been a campaign on social media by certain quarters to boycott goods produced by non-Muslims.

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

Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng had also reportedly urged Umno and PAS to condemn the boycott.

In response, PAS deputy president Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man accused Lim of playing up racial sentiments and failing to respect the free will of Muslim consumers.

"The main aim of the campaign is for Muslim consumers to choose halal, tried and tested products of Muslims. To date, there has not been a call to boycott non-Muslim



Attractive prices: (From right) Saifuddin, Lembah Pantai MP Fahmi Fadzil, Saifuddin's deputy Chong Chieng Jen and Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry secretary-general Datuk Muez Abd Aziz checking out ikan bilis sold below market value at the i-Keep carnival in Kuala Lumpur. I-Keep is an initiative between the government and 10 selected companies to offer cheaper essential household items at 268 premises nationwide to ease the people's financial burden. — Bernama

products by PAS," said Ibrahim.

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

"In fact, in our meetings with wholesaler and retailer associations, everything was as usual.

"Nothing on this (boycott) was raised," he said.

Meanwhile, Malaysian Muslim Solidarity president Aminuddin

Yahaya said it was not asking the Malays to boycott the Chinese and that the latter need not worry because economically, they were already much better off.

"The Chinese won't buy from Malay shops, so we are merely helping the poor Malay businesses.

"If we prosper economically, the Chinese too would benefit as we need them for business," he said.

Former law minister Datuk Zaid Ibrahim has also decried calls for such a boycott.

"Why do they want to make life difficult? As if it's not hard enough already," he said.

Watch the video
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