

## Face masks on sale only at 25% of outlets checked

Bernama -April 8, 2020 9:15 PM



**Local producers can only supply about 1.1 million face masks a day, while the rest have to be imported.**

**PUTRAJAYA:** The supply of face masks has improved to 25% compared to just 4% before this, Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry (KPDNHEP) enforcement director Iskandar Halim Sulaiman said.

“This means of 100 outlets checked, 25 of them had face masks for sale,” he told reporters after checking on essential items at the 101 City Mall Tesco Hypermarket here today.

Despite the increase, there is still insufficient supply to meet market demand, he said.

Iskandar said demand for face masks nationwide, including from hospitals, is estimated to be at five million pieces per day, but local producers can only supply about 1.1 million a day, while the rest had to be imported.

KPDNHEP was also closely monitoring the market to ensure the item is not sold beyond the maximum price of RM1.50 per piece for the three-ply type, as determined by the government. So far, traders are complying, he said.

Iskandar also said that hand sanitisers were available at 60% of shops checked.

He said three men were issued compound fines totalling RM250,000 for discreetly storing face masks and also selling them above the maximum price.

This came after a raid was conducted on the premises in Kota Damansara, Petaling Jaya, on March 25.

He said 223,000 pieces of three-ply face masks, valued at RM446,000, were seized in the raid.

"Investigations found that they were selling their supply of face masks via social media platforms for RM3.50 a piece," he said.

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