

# Stern action against traders raising price of face masks

**PUTRAJAYA:** Stern action will be taken by the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry against traders taking advantage of the novel coronavirus outbreak by indiscriminately increasing the price of face masks.

The ministry's secretary-general, Datuk Muez Abd Aziz, said in a statement that the face mask was an item placed under the price control list, where the maximum ceiling

price has been fixed on five types of face masks under the Price Control and Anti-Profitteering Act 2011.

He said legal action would be taken against errant traders, where they would face a maximum fine of RM100,000 or imprisonment for up to three years, or both if found guilty, while companies could be fined up to RM500,000 or compounded up to RM250,000 if found guilty.

Muez said the price of the face masks or surgical masks was varied, depending on the type.

The first three types are with earlobes, with the one-layered one at RM5 per box at wholesale price (retail price is RM7 per box).

The other is the two-layered mask, which is sold for RM8 per box (wholesale price) or RM10 per box at retail, or 20 sen per piece, he said.

He added that the third type was

the three-layered surgical mask, which is sold at RM25 per box or 80 sen per piece.

The two other types of surgical mask are the three-layered hijab-friendly one, which is RM30 per box or 80 sen per piece, and the N95 face mask which can be bought for RM100 per box or RM6 per piece.

Muez said it should be noted that besides the five types of face masks

where the ceiling price has been fixed, the ministry also has the power to take action under the Price Control and Anti-Profitteering Act 2011 against those who indiscriminately increase the price of other types of face masks.

He said the ministry's 2,300 enforcement officers are monitoring the situation and would take stern action against errant traders. — Bernama