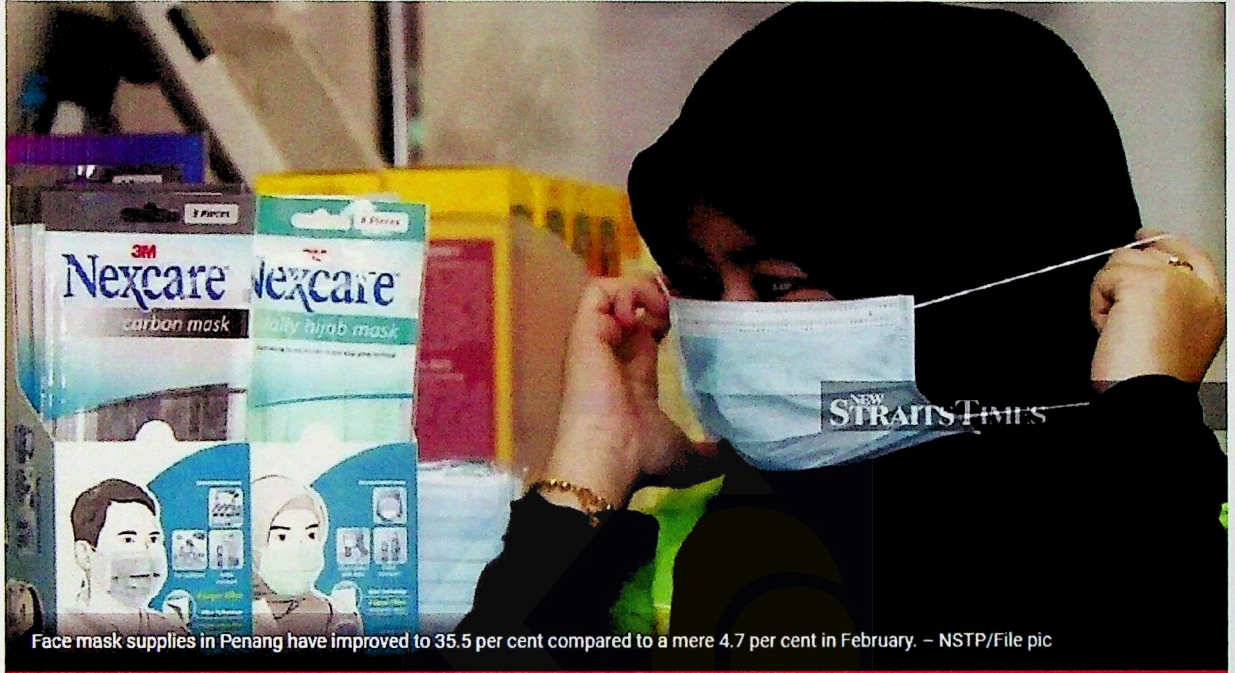


## Face mask supplies in Penang improving



Face mask supplies in Penang have improved to 35.5 per cent compared to a mere 4.7 per cent in February. – NSTP/File pic

By Audrey Dermawan  
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**GEORGE TOWN:** Face mask supplies in the state have improved to 35.5 per cent compared to a mere 4.7 per cent in February.

Penang Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry director Mohd Ridzuan Ab Ghapar said only 16 premises had face mask supplies from the total 343 premises checked in February.

He, however, said checks conducted at 398 premises last month showed 21 of them had face mask supplies.

"In February, the percentage of premises with face masks was only 4.7 per cent. It increased to 5.2 per cent in March. Checks from April 1 until yesterday showed that 33 of the 93 premises checked, or 35.5 per cent, have face mask supplies.

"We also received 21 complaints about face masks throughout the Movement Control Order (MCO), which we have acted on under provisions of the law.

"We expect face mask supplies to continue to improve this month following the ceiling price announcement of RM1.50 for each three-ply piece," he said, adding that the ban on export of face masks had also helped improve shortage.

Ridzuan said the state had no issues with hand sanitisers, with almost all premises having ample supply.

However, they did receive five complaints on price increases since March 18.

Ridzuan also said throughout the MCO, from March 18 until yesterday, they received 27 complaints on price increases for basic necessities.

"Among the complaints received were increases in the prices of vegetables, eggs, rice and others. We have officers going to the ground daily to monitor the price trends for sugar, flour, cooking oil, rice, vegetables, chicken, eggs and tissue papers.

"We obtained information from checks conducted on 702 premises, which include supermarkets, hypermarkets, mini markets, sundry shops, convenience stores and markets. Of the total, 48 premises (6.8 per cent) recorded panic buying at the start of the MCO," he added, noting that the situation had since been brought under control.

Although there is no shortage of basic necessities, he said, there were minor issues with some such as bread, sardines, eggs, meehoon and flour.

He added that the suppliers had since ramped up production to ensure ample supply.

Those with complaints on price increases can direct it to <http://eaduan.kpdnhep.gov.my/eaduan> or through WhatsApp at 0192794317.

<https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2020/04/582496/face-mask-supplies-penang-improving>

