

Face mask makers agree to increase output

By MAZWIN NIK ANIS
mazwin@thestar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: Face mask manufacturers have agreed to increase production to normalise supply even as the government gave its assurance that it will buy any extra supply.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail said the additional supply of masks to be produced meant there was no need to limit the purchase of these items.

He said during the ministry's discussion with local face mask manufacturers, it had given the government's assurance to buy the additional supply to create stockpiles.

"We are pleased that the manufacturers have come back to us to voice their agreement to increase production.

"Once this is done, we will be able to have enough supply of face masks for the public in the wake of the Covid-19 viral outbreak," he told reporters after a dialogue with industry players yesterday.

The government, said Saifuddin, would facilitate the manufacturers so that they could quickly produce the additional stock.

This included getting the Human Resources Ministry to "fast approve" their applications for additional shifts as well as for the Home Ministry to give them the go-ahead to employ skilled people for the job, he said.



All you need to know: Health officials giving out the Health Alert Card leaflets to tourists entering the country by sea to curb the virus spread, at the Boustead Cruise Centre in Pulau Indah at Port Klang. — Bernama

There are fewer than 10 face mask manufacturers in the country focusing on the production of masks for surgical and industrial use.

Face masks are controlled items, with the price set at 80 sen per unit for three-ply masks and RM6 per unit for the N95.

Saifuddin said while there were

incidents of panic buying and the purchase of face masks and hand sanitisers in bulk, these only occurred in certain places.

"We received reports that this does not happen all over the country but only in certain places and states.

"For the ministry to impose a

limit on the purchase of these items due to just a few cases, I don't think it has reached that (point)," he said.

On the input from industry players on how businesses had been affected by the outbreak, Saifuddin said their views would be compiled and presented to the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister.

HARI :
TARIKH :
M/SURAT :

JUMAAT
14/2/2020
2