

## Ministry keeps an eye on supply of face masks

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**PUTRAJAYA:** The Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry will closely monitor and take necessary action to ensure sufficient supply of face masks in the market to help keep the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) infection in check.

Its minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail said this is currently the ministry's top priority. "We will closely monitor the issue and then deal with the importers (to increase import) as well as ask local manufacturers to increase output (to meet the demand)," he told reporters after attending the ministry's staff monthly gathering here yesterday.

He said the face masks, some imported from Europe and China and also manufactured locally, come under the price control list, meaning traders are not allowed to sell them beyond the ceiling price set by the ministry.

"It is under price control whether there is a disaster or not," he added.

Saifuddin Nasution said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail had also asked the ministry to ensure sufficient supply of face masks in the market and is sold below the ceiling price.

He warned that ministry enforcement personnel will take stern action against those who take advantage of the situation by selling such items at a higher price. — Bernama