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Retailers get 2 weeks to adjust displays

Wendy Lim

THE Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs is giving retailers two weeks to make arrangements to give more prominence to the display of "made-in-Malaysia" products.

Its minister, Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayob, said the grace period is to allow the retailers a little more time to make necessary adjustments to their store designs in terms of product placements.

"We decided to give them time to make the changes as several of them called me up. After two weeks, our officials will be making visits to the outlets to check if the regulations are adhere to," he told reporters after opening Carrefour Hypermarket's latest outlet in Seri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur, yesterday.

Retailers who do not separate local products - and appropriately sign-posted as "made-in-Malaysia" - from imported items in their displays will contravene trade laws such as the Price Tagging Order 1977, Price Control Regulation (Labelling Order); Weights and Measures Act 1972; and Trade Descriptions Act 1972.

The Cabinet had on Wednesday decided that retailers should promote locally-made goods through better store designs and product placements.

Megat Junid also said the ministry has received complaints from local producers regarding difficulties in securing deals to supply their products to the hypermarkets.

"If such conditions persist, the Government will have no choice but to draw up guidelines to prevent discrimination against local producers," he said.

In view of the increasing operating costs in the country of late, other retailers should follow Carrefour's example by purchasing directly from the farmers and producers. By eliminating the middlemen, the consumers will also benefit in terms of lower prices, Megat Junid said.

He also noted that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had said he would like to see "garden corners" being set up at all hypermarkets and supermarkets as part of efforts to encourage vegetable growing among Malaysians.

Carrefour Seri Petaling, which opens on March 16, is the company's fourth outlet in Malaysia.

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