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Rafidah-Duty

ANTI-DUMPING DUTY ON NEWSPRINT TO PROTECT LOCAL INDUSTRY - RAFIDAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 28 (Bernama) -- The government's decision to impose anti-dumping duty on imported newsprint is to protect the domestic newsprint industry, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said today.

She said the local newsprint industry would be affected if the duty was not levied.

"Through studies carried out, it is clear there is dumping of newsprint. Some quarters are selling newsprint at unreasonable prices," she told reporters after an information session on opportunities to own a house under the National Economic Stimulus Package and 2004 Budget organised by Wanita Umno.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced the imposition of between six and 43 per cent anti-dumping duty for five years with effect from Thursday in the 2004 Budget tabled in Parliament on Sept 12.

Following the announcement, the Malaysian Newspaper Publishers Association warned yesterday that cover prices of newspapers might have to be raised by at least 20 sen per copy.

Rafidah explained that the government did not impose the anti-dumping duty to its whims but according to procedures and laws set by the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

She said local newspaper publishers must realise that if they bought dumped newsprint, they are actually opening the market to foreign companies and giving them lucrative income.

"Yes, people who normally buy the cheap newsprint will be angry because there is a duty, but don't forget, do we want to allow foreigners or foreign companies to purposely dump their goods in Malaysia and kill our own industry?" she said.

On Friday, her ministry announced that between 5.59 per cent and 43.24 per cent anti-dumping duty would be imposed on imported newsprint from the Philippines, South Korea, Japan, Canada and the United States.

-- BERNAMA

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