

Students 12 and under only need face shields, not masks – minister

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COVID-19 | Students 12-years-old and below are only required to wear face shields when they are at school, according to Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

The senior minister in charge of the security cluster said this was decided by the Special Ministerial Committee on Covid-19 during a meeting earlier today.

"I have previously stressed about how burdensome it would be for families especially those who are poor to have to buy face masks for their children daily.

"Let's say a face mask costs RM1, so if a family has five children, they would have to spend RM5 a day on face masks alone. This is on top of what they have to spend on the children's meals at school.

"After a discussion today, the health ministry has agreed that children under the age of 12 can be allowed to only wear face shields (at school)," he told a press

conference today.

Ismail added that the government still encourages face masks to be worn by students, but it is not obligated.

Since Aug 1, the government has made it compulsory for masks to be worn by individuals at public spaces that are crowded and when they are riding public transports.

However, wearing the protective gear had not been made obligatory for school students as the government wanted to study its impact especially on parents who are facing financial constraints.

'Let police handle minister Khairuddin's case'

Meanwhile, Ismail (photo) was asked at the presser about the case of Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Khairuddin Aman Razali, who was only fined RM1,000 for breaking his quarantine order after returning from Turkey on July 7.

On this, the defence minister said he had previously mooted the idea of increasing the maximum fine under the Prevention and Control of Infectious

Diseases Act to RM10,000.

He added that this had yet to be done as the act would need to be amended first, and thus leaving the Health Ministry with a power to impose compound of not more than RM1,000.

However, Ismail said that further action can be taken by taking a case to court.

"If we want to bring a case to court, it has to be investigated by the police and the investigation paper has to be submitted to the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC).

"The AGC would have to decide whether to take the case to court or to NFA (no further action).

"And I understand that the prime minister had made a statement yesterday, that we are leaving this matter to the authorities to investigate. So, we leave it to the police to do their investigation," he added.

Khairuddin's trip to Turkey from July 2 to 7 was first raised by Seputeh MP Teresa Kok in the Dewan Rakyat last Tuesday.

It had since drawn the anger of many members of the public, including netizens who then started calling for action to be taken against the PAS MP for Kuala Nerus.

However, the Health Ministry, in a statement on Saturday, said the minister was fined on Aug 7, which several netizens found suspicious.

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