

By LEE YUK PENG

KUALA LUMPUR: The Consumer Protection Act will cover purchases made via electronic transaction soon, said Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

He said he would exercise his power as minister to amend regulations in the act so that consumers making electronic transactions were protected.

"The regulations will be gazetted without going through the amendment of the Consumer Protection Act itself," he told reporters at the Parliament Lobby Monday.

Earlier, Ismail Sabri replied to Datuk Dr Marcus Mojigoh (BN-Putatan) that the act did not cover electronic transaction at the moment.

However, he said consumers would be able to bring the matter to the consumer tribunal over purchases they made.

Another proposed act to be tabled soon was the Competition Act to check on monopoly and prices fixed by cartels, he said. He cited the case of the 50-sen mask sold at RM5 a piece. Such a case could not arise in the future if a competitive act was in place.

Ismail told Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (PAS - Kuala Selangor) that the bill was now with the Attorney-General and would be finalised soon.

Ismail said he hoped to table the act in Dewan Rakyat in March next year.

To another question on hypermarkets, Ismail Sabri said the current ratio of having one hypermarket to a population of 250,000 was still in practice despite requests being made to lower the ratio of 100,000.

"But I do not know how long this will last. I am told that we are one of the countries that is very strict on this," said Ismail Sabri.

In his reply to Datuk Johari Abdul (PKR-Sungai Petani), Ismail Sabri said local products made up of 80% of goods sold in hypermarket while the goods from Bumiputra small and medium industries made up 7%.

Source: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/11/30/nation/20091130170641&sec=nation>