Bernama: **Control Hypermarket Locations - Fomca**

PETALING JAYA, May 4 (Bernama) -- The domestic trade and consumer affairs ministry and local councils should work hand-in-hand to ensure hypermarkets are located in accordance to the conditions of their licence.

Currently, the hypermarkets were concentrated in certain areas and this was detrimental to small businesses and also affected the interests of consumers, according to the Federation of Malaysian Consumer Association (Fomca).

Its secretary-general, Muhammad Shaani Abdullah, said today that local authorities often disregarded the licensing conditions imposed on such hypermarkets by the ministry.

For example, he cited a hypermarket licence as stating that hypermarkets should be located at least 3.5km apart.

"But, what we find now is that two hypermarkets are sited side by side and this violates the licensing conditions."

Muhammad said the ministry should tighten the conditions and ensure that local authorities complied with the licensing conditions.

Meanwhile, the ministry has capped the number of foreign hypermarket licences at 107, till the end of this year.

Currently, there are 78 hypermarkets operating in the country, the major ones being Tesco, Giant and Carrefour.

Muhammad said consumers should not be duped into believing that hypermarkets were cheaper than other stores.

-- BERNAMA