



06 JUL, 2024

'Do more to encourage usage of energy-efficient appliances'

The Star, Malaysia



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PETALING JAYA: More allocation should be given to support the rebate programme encouraging usage of energy-efficient appliances, says a consumer group.

Federation of Malaysian Consumers Association (Fomca) chief executive officer Dr Saravanan Thambirajah said that by providing more cash, it would allow consumers to participate in sustainable practices.

"The government should also add more eligible appliances, not only air conditioners and refrigerators," he said, commenting on the Sustainability Achieved Via Energy Efficiency (SAVE) 4.0 by the Sustainable Energy Development Authority (Seda).

Last December, Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad said RM50mil was allocated for the programme.

Consumers were allowed to receive rebates worth up to RM400 that can be used to purchase energy-efficient air conditioners and refrigerators with four- or five-star labels issued by the Energy Commission.

According to Seda's SAVE 4.0 frequently asked questions section, it said the programme would run until December this year or until the allocation of quota is reached.

Saravanan said the period for the subscription should be extended beyond December.

"Maybe another version of the initiative, SAVE 5.0, can be introduced," he said, adding that the programme was well-received by electrical appliance retailers as well.

Saravanan said consistent support from the government through such an initiative would make the nation's goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions more realistic.

Business executive A. James, 32, is hopeful for the initiative to be extended for a longer period.

"My newly purchased house is set to be ready by December. If the programme is extended beyond this period, at least I can save some cost when buying appliances while contributing to green practices.

"Some of my friends have also tried to purchase eligible appliances under this programme but were told the quota had been used up," he said.

Meanwhile, photographer Glenn Guan said he was left in the dark after the shop he bought an air conditioner at was delisted from the Seda website.

He was told by the dealer that no payment of rebate amounting to RM200 was received after the purchase was made.

"The shop told me that the rebate application was pending. And, after a while, I found out that the shop's name had been removed from the list of eligible dealers.

"They left me hanging," he said, demanding an explanation.