

## MEF: Employers need more support to survive extended MCO 3.0 lockdown

PETALING JAYA: Whilst it was necessary to extend the MCO 3.0 lockdown for another two weeks from 15 to 28 June, the government must also ensure effective measures are in place to support affected employers, especially the SMEs and micro enterprises.

MEF President Dato Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman J.P said the extension of the lockdown was unavoidable as the average daily rate of infection had not reduced to below 5,000, and it was also foreseeable that further extensions may be imposed in future.

“The lockdown has severely impacted business and the situation on the ground is that many SMEs and micro enterprises are at breaking point,” said Dato’ Dr Syed Hussain.

“We hope the government would be able to urgently address the issues faced by employers to ensure sustainability and at the same time assist the government to stabilise the labour market.

“Among the measures that can be implemented quickly is to enhance the PEMERKASA+ stimulus package by allocating a further sum of at least RM40 billion.

“The government should also expand the scope of the moratorium to include the M40 and all businesses covering all loans, including overdrafts, mortgages, vehicle loans and credit cards.

“The moratorium should be granted automatically for six months until end 2021 at 0% interest.

“During this period, the banks should waive all interest and bank charges such as for rescheduling exercise and late interest payments.

“In this time of national emergency, we are of the view that the banks must step forward to help businesses and individual borrowers as this would go a long way towards ensuring a smooth recovery of the economy,” he added.

Dato’ Dr Syed Hussain said the long lockdown and continued financial stress had caused mental stress with higher incidences of suicide, divorce and domestic violence.



“We cannot afford to keep extending the lockdown period as many more will suffer financially and also mentally,” he said.

“The government must provide the necessary financial assistance as this is the main cause of mental stress.

“We also urge the government to take immediate action to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and not compromise with groups or individuals who do not follow the SOPs.

“The majority cannot be made to suffer because of the few who break the rules.

“We strongly support the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme and the government should do all that is necessary to achieve herd immunity.

“We must make sure that the nation is not only physically healthy but mentally too.”

For further information, contact the MEF Secretariat at 03-7955-7778 or fax 03-7955-9008 or email [mef-hq@mef.org.my](mailto:mef-hq@mef.org.my).

**11 JUNE 2021**