

Lock down red zones, let others carry on, say bosses

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The Malaysian Employers Federation said it is unfair for those doing business in states with a low infection rate to be subjected to the same treatment as companies in red zones.

PETALING JAYA: Bosses have asked Putrajaya to allow companies outside Covid-19 red zones to operate to ensure the survival of businesses while maintaining the ban on interstate travelling.

Malaysian Employers Federation president Syed Hussain Syed Husman said currently the red zones are in Selangor (2,299 cases yesterday), Kuala Lumpur (1,361) and Negeri Sembilan (700), while other states had recorded lower than 300 cases and Perlis did not record any cases.

"We have members in low infection areas in Terengganu, Kedah and Perlis.

"They say it is unfair to be subjected to the same treatment as companies in red zones, such as in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, where the infection rate is still high," he said in a statement today.



Syed Hussain Syed Husman.

Syed Hussain said their proposal is one way to balance lives and livelihoods.

"The government has done much to control the spread of Covid-19 and we appreciate all the efforts and support provided to employers throughout this difficult period."

But the pressure on employers, employees and the rakyat has reached extreme levels and the only way to survive is by allowing businesses to operate, he added.

"The well-being of our overall economy should not suffer due to the high number of recorded new cases in red zone areas," he said.

Due to that, MEF proposed that efforts to control the spread of Covid-19 as well as the screening and vaccination programmes be intensified in the red zones and that only industries in essential sectors be allowed to operate.

As for non-red zones, he said all sectors should be allowed to operate with strict SOPs in place.

"We must not adopt a blanket approach but instead focus on a holistic targeted approach, and advocate joint responsibility between the government and the private sector in its management."

Syed Hussain said the states could work with the federal authorities to formulate special approaches to resuscitate the economy.

"We are in no position to speak about the federal government's approach. But from a business point of view, we suggest (for) our approach to be carefully considered by the experts."

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