

## RMCO extension must come with extra stimulus measures

By [Farah Solhi](#) - August 25, 2020 @ 10:40am



Shoppers are required to observe physical distancing and scan the MySejahtera bar code before entering shops. - NSTP/MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

KUALA LUMPUR: EMPLOYERS and retail associations believe that while extending the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) beyond Aug 31 may be necessary, more must be done to ensure the economy continues to improve.

They said an extension should also be accompanied by additional stimulus measures to help businesses continue the recovery momentum.

Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan said the government must study how to ensure retrenchment rates do not spike as it did following the Movement Control Order (MCO) in March.

"We've seen reports saying that around 70,000 people were retrenched up to August. We believe the actual figures are higher because we have to include retrenchment practised by micro-enterprises as well.



Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan

"Most of these businesses said they can sustain themselves for only two months during heightened restriction periods, such as the MCO.

"And sometimes, their retrenchment goes unreported," he told the *New Straits Times*.

Shamsuddin said the rising number of people involved in the gig economy showed that people were seeking additional means to survive.

"While I agree that we need restrictions to stop the spread of Covid-19, I also believe the government should explore further and address this issue so that employees will continue to have job security."

Malaysian Retail Chain Association president Shirley Tay said association members were coping with challenges to revive their businesses.

"Their businesses are still affected.

"They are resilient and are learning to make changes, but the government must continue to help them as much as possible.

"Hopefully, there will be further stimulus packages, financial aid and tax relief made available to help them get through this difficult period, as well as for people to shop safely."

Malaysian Hairdressing Association founder and Mondiale Coiffure (International) Malaysia president Billy Lim said industry players had no choice but to comply if the government extended the RMCO.

"We have adapted to the standard operating procedures (SOP) since resuming operations. It should be no problem if the government extends the RMCO. We'll just continue with our operation."

Lim said many hairdressers and salon owners were recovering from the effects of the MCO.

"Even after resuming operations, some services were not allowed, which has reduced their income significantly.

"If the government extends the RMCO, I hope it can come up with new guidelines for the hairdressers to work with."