

MEF urges employees to stay safe, healthy

By [Farah Solhi](#) - October 3, 2020 @ 9:48am



A man wearing a face mask at a self-service laundry in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

KUALA LUMPUR: Following the record number of Covid-19 cases yesterday, federations and unions are calling for the public to remain calm and continue to comply with the standard operating procedures (SOP) vigilantly.

The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) urges its members and employers to abide by the SOP until further directives by the government.

Its president, Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman, said it was time for everybody to come together to combat the Covid-19 wave.

"In the past two weeks, new cases reached three digits, which showed that we have yet to curb the spread of Covid-19.

"Combating Covid-19 is everyone's responsibility and all employers have an important duty to observe.

"At this critical juncture, we must strictly observe the SOP as this reflects our commitment as responsible employers."

MEF executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan said the country could not afford to slow down its economic momentum.

"We have about 15.8 million employees working in offices since we are allowed to operate on full capacity.

"Going back to working from home will slow down the employees momentum. But if we have to go back to working from home, we have no other choice but to comply."

He said the onus was on the public to strictly follow the SOP and be responsible.

"Working spaces and offices will need to tighten up SOPs and ensure everybody follows the rules, as we understand the high risk this virus has posed since sometimes Covid-19 patients are asymptomatic.

"It is crucial for employers to engage their employees. If you are feeling unwell, immediately get yourself checked. Don't go to the office if you are sick."

National Union of the Teaching Profession secretary-general Harry Tan said the union was putting their trust on the authorities to steer the country out of the Covid-19 wave once more.

"Until there is a vaccine, it is paramount that everybody's health and safety are looked after. We understand that everybody will have to undergo a little discomfort or are forced to face issues in this situation."

He said the government was facing a difficult situation and imposing new security measures would not be easy for anybody.

"We understand this. We know that economically, our country cannot afford another lockdown.

"If we have to go that way again, then there will be more people losing their jobs and social issues will arise. So we understand the government's irony here, hence we are calling for the government to make the right decision.

"If we need to have another lockdown, I can only hope for the government to do more targeted or enhanced MCO in certain areas, especially in red zones. This way, we can be assured that economic activities outside these areas will continue. "

He said the country's economy was recovering and what was more important was to manage the crisis well.

"We are at war once again (with the new cases) and we cannot have too many captains."

Tan said the union would support any direction taken by the government, so long the as people's health and safety were prioritised.

"The reason we had our Movement Control Order (MCO) before was to flatten the curve.

"Now I believe the country is ready for any eventuality, as we've increased our testing capabilities and quarantine centres, with hospitals better equipped to cope with a large number of patients."

He believed the new spike in cases would present a new set of challenges that the country would be better prepared for.