

Vaccination momentum must be maintained, urge groups

NATION

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PETALING JAYA: It is very critical for the vaccination programme to be continued and enhanced even though there is no minister in charge of it now, say business groups.

This is especially so as it was announced that a company being allowed to operate would depend on its proportion of fully vaccinated employees, said Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman.

“Employers are eager to get all their employees vaccinated or at least at the 80% level as soon as possible so that they can start to operate at full swing and make their businesses more sustainable,” he said.

By allowing only employees who had completed their vaccination to report for duty, they were complying with Section 15 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994 to provide a safe and healthy workplace, he added.

Syed Hussain said he hoped the country’s new government would retain the momentum from the previous administration, citing the vaccination programme where more than 400,000 people have been vaccinated on a daily basis in the past few weeks.

The new prime minister would need to gain the confidence of the rakyat by quickly bringing down the number of daily new Covid-19 infections and reducing the number of deaths, he added.

SME Association of Malaysia president Datuk Michael Kang was optimistic that the vaccination programme would carry on, regardless whether there is a minister in charge of it or not.

“The machinery is already in place to ensure that the vaccination programme will carry on, so we need to continue to speed up vaccinations as there is still a lot of other states that have low vaccination rates,” he said.

Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali had earlier said that the day-to-day administration of the civil service will not be disrupted by the resignation of the prime minister.

Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) president Datuk Tan Kok Liang said he believes that civil servants will continue to do their job as they have pledged to ensure all government programmes continue to run.

“We are tired and want to move on with our lives. We also want for everyone to be vaccinated so that the economy can reopen and we can feed our families,” he said.

Tan added that he was also looking forward to the new prime minister revisiting strategies for a swift and safe reopening of tourism activities and the easing of travel restrictions.

He said people in other countries who have already been fully vaccinated should be able to come in but if Covid-19 cases are still high, then a controlled travel bubble should be established.