

## **THE NATIONAL RECOVERY PLAN**

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1. The Government has announced a National Recovery Plan. Unfortunately it is more of a time table for recovery based on the number of new cases and the dates the lockdown would be loosened. How the reduction is to be achieved during the stipulated period is not explained. The virus may not oblige and continue to plague the nation despite the time table.

2. We are now seeing a rise in the number of new cases. When the number decreased to 4000 plus, we believed that it must be due to the strategy adopted by the Government. But then the figure started to rise again. On June 18 new cases increased to over 6000. This figure does not seem to accord with the time table.

3. Actually the recovery plan should focus on the action to be carried out to reduce the number of the new cases. We know the measures that have to be taken.

4. We know for example the SOP is intended to reduce the spreading of the pandemic. We also know that the MCO is also intended to reduce infection. But the increase in the number of new cases mean that the SOP and the MCO have not been effective.

5. The question is why? The Government needs to study the situation. Is it because people are disobeying Government instruction? For example the masks are not worn properly or the social distancing is not practiced.

6. We know about clusters. Why are there these clusters? What happened? The workers for example may be lax in practicing the SOP. They are not very disciplined. No one is overseeing their obeying the SOP.

7. The workers go to work in buses. The workers' buses may not be sanitised. Maybe there are too many on the buses.

8. The workers have to walk from the bus to the work place and back. Do they keep their distance from each other? And at the place of work are they separated from each other far enough. How do they behave during coffee break or when they are being briefed?

9. Many live in workers' quarters. Some of these are well constructed but some are hastily-built huts. Do they keep their social distances while in their quarters? How far are their beds from each other?

10. Yes, there are many occasions when the workers expose themselves to infection. Merely ordering them to obey the SOP is not enough. The authorities, the police, RELA and frontline people must ensure that the SOP is followed properly. Merely imposing fines is not enough.

11. Everyday more than 6000 new cases are identified. We do not have enough beds for all of them. Some with mild symptoms have been asked to quarantine at home. As we all know mild cases can become serious. At home members of the family cannot go near them. With the virus one of the effect is to have difficulty in breathing.

12. At the hospital oxygen would be given. But at home there is no oxygen. The family members feel distressed watching their family members unable to breathe. He may die and the family members could not handle the deceased. But can they just do nothing? They may want to do something. When they go near the deceased, they may get infected. Then we are going to see a cluster. And the number of new cases will increase.

13. Vaccination is effective in reducing cases. But there also we find problems. Just registering is a problem. People in the rural areas, especially old people may not have handphones, or may not know how to register online. They may be too old, incapable.

14. Initially the vaccination centres are in the urban areas.

15. I can go on. But it is clear that the management of the pandemic is not very good. It is improving now but more can be done with less hassle.

16. This is about the pandemic. What about the economic, the finances, the social problems. Already people are committing suicide. There are lots of domestic quarrels and beating up.

17. Some politicians believe that what we need to do is to have a Parliament. Yes this is good and necessary. But many seem to think that all that is needed is to change Government. I think a change is needed. But the likelihood is to get another weak Government with paper thin majority. The concern would be about becoming Prime Minister – that's all.

18. With all these problems some people only see opportunities for making money. Maybe this has contributed to the shortage of vaccine.

19. The Government is listening and doing something. But there are lots more things to do. Only professionals with vast experience can come up with ideas to tackle all the four crises.

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