

## **Covid-19 prevention SOP is ready for all economic sectors**

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CORONAVIRUS | The Health Ministry has prepared a new standard operating procedure (SOP) to prevent Covid-19 infection for all economic sectors, said Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah.

The Health director-general said priority to reopen operations would be given to construction and large industries first, adding that the services sector would also be given the opportunity.

"We have the SOP for all services now and we are opening up in phases.

"In terms of priority, it is for construction and large industries first, then the services sector, slowly and surely," he said during a press conference in Putrajaya today.

Noor Hisham was answering a question on whether there are any guidelines provided for services and transportation sector to follow when they start operation again.

This followed the International Trade and Industry Minister Azmin Ali's announcement today, saying that the government has allowed companies under economic sectors that have been permitted to operate during the movement control order (MCO) to resume full operations starting tomorrow.

Azmin had said that the companies, however, must adhere to the SOP which had been set according to their respective sectors.

According to Noor Hisham, MOH now supports for the country's economic activities to return to normal as Malaysia has entered the recovery phase in the pandemic.

Prior to the MCO, he added, MOH had taken three factors into consideration as per the practice of the World Health Organisation before announcing an emergency situation.

"First, they see if an outbreak causes many deaths. That is one factor they have to be sure to call for an emergency.

"Second factor is whether an infection spreads in a speedy and easy manner, and the third is economic factor. All these have to be taken into consideration before declaring a pandemic.

"So in Malaysia, we saw these three factors, and we were expecting a surge in mid-April. At that time, we were not sure if there will be a sudden exponential surge.

"But now, we are already in the recovery phase. So we encouraging the economic sector to return to normal," he said.

However, it comes with strict conditions to be followed so as to ensure there won't be another outbreak.

"There are conditions set by MOH. Among them are that workers are required to undergo Covid-19 screening, there is enough space provided for workers to do their jobs and there must be no gathering of workers in a confined space.

"Social distancing must also be observed, and companies must make sure that their employees practice hand hygiene by regularly washing their hands using soap or hand sanitiser," he said.

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