

M'sia should tighten borders to keep Covid-19 under control - Noor Hisham

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Annabelle Lee

COVID-19 | Given the emergence of new Covid-19 waves in countries that once had the virus under control, the Health Ministry believes that borders need to be tightened further to prevent the same from happening in Malaysia.

In a press conference this evening, Health director-general Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah shared that 899 of 104,188 international arrivals between April 3 and Aug 23 have tested positive.

This constitutes a 0.008 positive rate.

“Border control needs to be increased in cooperation with multiple agencies to prevent individuals with the potential of being infected by Covid-19 from entering the country,” he said.

South Korea, once lauded as a model for its Covid-19 response, has been

registering three-digit daily new cases in recent weeks.

Noor Hisham also stressed that frontliners at the border needed to follow workplace standard operating procedures (SOPs), and reminded them to immediately inform their superiors should any challenges arise.

He further urged all Malaysians to obey the government's rules and SOPs.

Asked if the ministry was considering advising the government to close the border to non-citizens arriving from high-risk countries, Noor Hisham did not rule this out.

"We need to be vigilant and certainly our recommendation is to tighten the border, not to ease it.

"We are looking into steps on how we can do so through the Immigration Department and even the armed forces, as well as looking into illegal entrants into our country," he said.

Unpaid claims will be addressed

Meanwhile, the top official assured medical officers (MOs) at Sungai Buloh

Hospital that they will be paid their dues.

Health news website CodeBlue previously published an anonymous letter written by a purported MO from the Covid-19 hospital alleging they had yet to receive their relocation, on-call and Covid-19 allowances.

Noor Hisham said the ministry's Finance Department has been informed to address the issue "as soon as possible".

"This is not right to our officers on the ground, especially the frontliners. This will be addressed by our administration and hopefully (resolved) as soon as possible," he said, adding that the issue had not been raised to his attention until recently.

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