

Learn from India's Covid-19 mistakes, says DG Hisham

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Malaysia ought to take heed of India's devastating second Covid-19 wave and ensure gatherings of any kind are avoided, opined health director-general Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah.

He also warned against any elections or sudden loosening of movement restrictions.

In late January, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the country had beaten Covid-19 and this led people there to celebrate and drop their guard.

The Delhi government then allowed gatherings for the Kumbh Mela Hindu festival in April. It also held multiple state election campaigns and polls.

Today, India (main photo) recorded 4,187 Covid-19 deaths and more than

400,000 daily new cases.

Noor Hisham viewed this as a cautionary tale.

“We need to learn from India and what they did to cause this tsunami (of Covid-19 cases) there.

“So we can learn and prevent a tsunami in our country,” he said.

He also drew comparisons between the infections caused by India’s state elections and the September 2020 Sabah state election in Malaysia.

Noor Hisham said he, thus, supported using the emergency proclamation to suspend all polls.

“Now we are worried that if we didn’t use the emergency ordinance then the Sarawak state election would need to be held in June. So by using it we can avoid that state election.

“We have also used the emergency ordinance to avoid three by-elections in Batu Sapi, Bugaya and Grik.

“Imagine if Sarawakians travelled home from Peninsular Malaysia to vote in the rural areas, infections would definitely happen,” he said.

Noor Hisham also predicted that the local healthcare system would not be able to cope if an outbreak happened in rural Sarawak.

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