

PM assures M'sians in Cambodia borders will open soon

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Bernama

Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob assured Malaysians in Cambodia that the country will soon open its borders and ease the process of travelling, especially for those residing overseas.

He said the Omicron variant has delayed the country's plan to move into the endemic stage, eventually delaying the process of opening the borders as well.

"We almost announced Malaysia could enter the endemic stage but in December 2021 the Omicron variant, which is a super spreader, was detected.

"However, Omicron is not as bad as Delta. It spreads quickly but is not as dangerous as Delta," he said at the dinner with Keluarga Malaysia in Cambodia on Wednesday night.

Malaysians will eventually need to learn to live with Covid-19, he added.

“We have to accept it as any other disease such as dengue.”

In recent days, Malaysia’s Covid-19 cases hit about 27,000 infections daily, however, a majority of the cases are of Category 1 and 2, due to the high vaccination rate in the country.

“I know a lot of you are eager to come back home. I understand some of you have not gone home for almost two years.

”So we will start opening our borders to the whole world soon and you can return to Malaysia,” he said.

There are about 5,000 Malaysians living in Cambodia, and 2,000 of them are in the capital Phnom Penh.

Important move

Ismail Sabri said the opening of the country's borders is important because many have been affected by the closure since the Covid-19 pandemic hit, especially those in the tourism sector.

"As such, we will reopen it. Restrictions on people's movement have a huge

impact on everyone," he added.

Previously, Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said early in the second quarter of this year would be a realistic timeline for the reopening of Malaysia's borders.

Also present at the dinner were Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah, International Trade and Industry Minister Azmin Ali, Federal Territories Deputy Minister Jalaluddin Alias, Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority (Risda) chairperson Mohd Salim Mohd Sharif, Malaysian Ambassador to Cambodia Eldeen Husaini Mohd Hashim and Senior Minister of the Cambodian Prime Minister's Department Othsman Hassan.

Othsman is also in charge of Islamic Affairs in Cambodia.

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