

GOVT LIFTS TRAVEL BAN ON FULLY VACCINATED

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NSI- 11/10/2021

PM urges people to undergo Covid-19 test before travelling across states to meet loved ones

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THE ban on interstate as well as international travel for Malaysians is lifted effective today.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said this would allow fully vaccinated individuals the freedom to return to their hometowns to see their loved ones, as well as travel abroad.

Announcing this in a live press conference yesterday, Ismail Sabri said the decision was made as the country met its target of having 90 per cent of its adult population vaccinated.

However, he said the lifting of the restrictions did not apply to those living in areas under the Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO), despite the fact they had been fully inoculated.

Those who have not been fully vaccinated or refused vaccination will be barred from interstate travel.

“Although the government has decided to relax the restrictions, I hope the people will not let their guard down and instead continue to comply with the standard operating procedures (SOP), which are still in place.

“The SOPs are the main factors that have helped the country to achieve this success (reducing the number of Covid-19 cases). I

would like to remind all that Act 342 (The Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988) is still being enforced, and those who fail to comply with the SOP will be subjected to action.”

He said that although police would no longer mount roadblocks at state borders, they would still conduct spot checks.

The prime minister encouraged those planning to travel across states to meet their elderly parents to first undergo swab tests.

“Although we have no plans to make Covid-19 swab tests compulsory, they are encouraged to do so. You must be responsible and take the necessary measures to protect your loved ones.”

Meanwhile, Ismail Sabri said the government has decided to abolish the MyTravelPass system, thus allowing fully vaccinated Malaysians to conduct international travel.

Prospective travellers have to get tested three days before their return to Malaysia and must undergo a 14-day quarantine upon arrival back home.

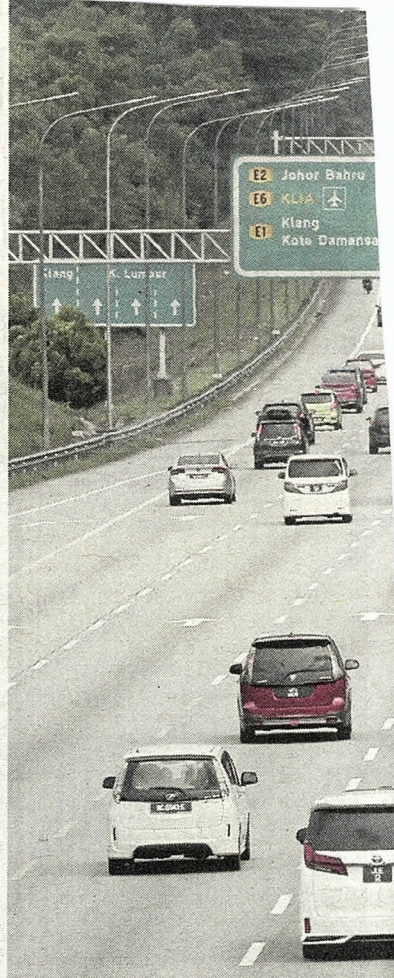
“Malaysians are allowed to observe quarantine at home. Those with symptoms will be admitted to the designated quarantine centres.”

He, however, said the country’s border remained closed to foreign tourists.

Ismail Sabri said the government would not revert to a “blanket” Movement Control Order if Covid-19 cases flared up again.

The authorities, he said, would instead use a targeted approach, such as the EMCO, on affected localities.

This, he said, was demonstrated recently in Bera, Pahang, as well as in Langkawi, where a hotel was closed after Covid-19 cases were detected.



Vehicles on the North-South Expressway in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY ZULFADHLI ZULKIFLI

He said that as Malaysia shifted towards the endemic phase of Covid-19, citizens have to live with the virus and comply with the regulations and SOP.

The Health Ministry, he said, was formulating the SOP and identifying the endemic phase’s transition date.

He said this would see a much lower number of SOPs from the current 180.

“What’s important is that we must train ourselves to live with Covid-19 since it cannot be eradicated completely. We must continue to self-regulate and comply with preventive measures.”

Ismail Sabri urged unvaccinated people to get inoculated as soon as possible as it was scientifically proven to reduce severe infection and the risk of hospitalisation.

The latest data from the ministry, he said, showed that vaccinations had helped ease ICU admissions by 83 per cent and reduced the percentage of death from the virus by 88 per cent.

“What we are observing is a declining trend in ICU bed utilisation and fatality rate.”

Page one caption: Fatimah Othman (left) and her husband, Ismail Ngah, watching Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob’s live announcement on the lifting of travel restrictions, at their home in Kuala Terengganu yesterday. PIC BY GHAZALI KORI



Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob