

PM: Lockdown no longer feasible

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More sectors allowed to reopen to ease strain on economy and rakyat

KUALA LUMPUR: More economic sectors are allowed to reopen as the lockdown move is no longer feasible as it is feared that it can have more negative implications, including on the mental health of Malaysians, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

He said the reopening of the sectors would not only help speed up economic recovery but also give the people the opportunity to improve their livelihoods.

"The reopening of 11 economic sectors in states under Phase One of the National Recovery Plan (NRP) was appropriate due to the high vaccination rates in the states.

"The government made the decision after taking into consideration data from the risk assessments conducted by the Health Ministry and the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry," he said in reply to Datuk Mohd Salim Sharif (BN-Jempol) who questioned the government's move to reopen economic sectors amid high daily Covid-19 cases.

Ismail Sabri also said that 74.7% of Malaysia's adult population had been fully vaccinated while 91.6% has received at least the first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine.

He added that the sectors were reopened with strict compliance to standard operating procedure, including allowing in only fully vaccinated customers and having only fully vaccinated workers on duty.

A total of 11 types of economic activities were allowed to resume operations in Phase

One of the NRP from Aug 16, including car wash, electrical and electronics shops, clothing, fashion and accessories shops, goldsmith shops, barbers, as well as beauty centres and hair salons.

To a supplementary question from Mohd Salim whether the decision to reopen the sectors had taken into consideration the risks of Covid-19 infection for the unvaccinated population aged 17 and below, Ismail Sabri said the responsibility lies with everyone to maintain discipline and self-control to prevent themselves, their families and their communities from being infected by the virus.

"When we reopen (the economic sectors), we see people beginning to flock to holiday destinations and some are not even wearing face masks.

"The future of our country, in terms of Covid-19, depends on us.

"We cannot depend on the vaccine alone. Self-control is very important or all our efforts will be in vain," he said.

To a question by Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail (PH-Kulim Bandar Baharu) on why the government relaxed social and economic restrictions despite the death toll hovering at three-digit figures daily, the Prime Minister maintained that the decision was done based on science and data.

He added that Covid-19 clusters from the 11 recently reopened economic sectors were few, citing the example of barbers, beauty



Replies from the floor: Ismail Sabri answering questions from MPs during the fourth session of the 14th Parliament in Kuala Lumpur. — Bernama

salons and car wash shops which had sparked little to no known cases or clusters throughout 2020.

"Based on data like these, we focused on reopening certain sectors," he said.

To Saifuddin's question on why former prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin was chosen to head the National Recovery Council (NRC), Ismail Sabri this was because

Muhyiddin has been chairing the meetings since the NRC was formed and therefore, was chosen as chair for the sake of continuity.

Watch the video
TheStarTV.com

