

COVID-19 CONCERNS

'NSC MEETING TO DECIDE ON S.O.P. FOR JOHOR POLLS'

It will include representatives from opposition, says Ismail Sabri

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THE Covid-19 standard operating procedures (SOP) for the Johor election will be discussed during the special National Security Council meeting, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said.

He said the Health Ministry will draw up the SOP recommendations, which he will raise at the meeting, which will also be attended by representatives from the opposition.

"I will leave it to the Health Ministry to decide on the SOP and it will be discussed during the NSC special meeting, where opposition members will also be represented. We will look into the SOP and decide on it," he said after a closed-door meeting with Bera Community Development Department staff here yesterday.

Ismail Sabri was earlier asked about the SOP for the state election following public concerns over the increasing Covid-19 cases nationwide, and the spread of



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob talking to staff of the Bera Community Development Department in Bera yesterday. PIC BY FARIZUL HAFIZ AWANG

the Omicron variant.

He said the recent rise in Covid-19 cases was a concern, with new cases breaching the 4,000 mark yesterday.

"Malaysians cannot afford to become complacent. Although we might need to live with Covid-19, we still have to control the outbreak.

"We do not want to end up like the United States, recording almost one million cases a day, France with 200,000 cases and the United Kingdom with 150,000 cases per day.

"Even if it does not involve

deaths, our hospital beds might not be able to accommodate the growing number of patients.

"We have to control and reduce the daily number of Covid-19 cases until it drops to below 1,000 cases per day and enter the endemic phase."

Ismail Sabri brushed aside rumours that the government would soon implement a total lockdown to stem infections, as well as impose a travel ban during the festive season.

"There will be no more "inter-state or inter-district travel bans. The economic sector will remain

open. I guarantee that there will be no more total lockdowns in the country.

"We will only focus on targeted lockdowns, or Enhanced Movement Control Orders (EMCOs), in areas with the highest number of infections.

"Only that one locality will be cordoned off, while the neighbouring areas will remain open.

"If a certain village is affected during the festive season, then the EMCO will be implemented in that village, and other people will be able to travel to their destinations."