

'NO QUARANTINE, TESTS FOR VAXXED TRAVELLERS'

Decision will aid economic recovery efforts, benefit people in both countries, says PM

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FROM April 1, fully vaccinated travellers can commute between Malaysia and Singapore by land without Covid-19 testing or quarantining.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob and his Singaporean counterpart, Lee Hsien Loong, announced this in a joint statement yesterday after a telephone conversation.

"The prime ministers recognise the good progress that both countries have made in vaccinating their respective populations and managing the Covid-19 pandemic, and noted the progress made in resuming cross-border travel through the Vaccinated Travel Lanes (by air and land).

"As Singapore and Malaysia transition to living with Covid-19, both prime ministers have agreed that it is timely to further reopen the land border.

"From April 1, 2022, for travel across the land border between Singapore and Malaysia, both countries will allow fully vaccinated travellers to enter without the need to undergo quarantine or testing, including pre-departure and on-arrival tests.

"This will apply to all categories of travellers and modes of transport via the land border," read the statement.

Ismail Sabri said the decision would contribute to economic recovery efforts and benefit the economies and livelihoods of people in both countries.

"As Malaysia reopens our borders to international travellers starting April 1, 2022, we will achieve another significant milestone in facilitating cross-border travel with our immediate neighbour, Singapore.

"This announcement reflects the long-standing relations and multifaceted cooperation as well as strong people-to-people ties between the two countries."

Lee hailed the land border re-



A bus carrying passengers travelling under the Vaccinated Travel Lane crossing the Causeway in Johor in December last year, file pic

opening as a significant milestone in both countries' transition to coexisting with Covid-19.

"It reflects the strong collaboration both sides have enjoyed throughout the pandemic and it will help both countries emerge stronger from this crisis."

On Wednesday, Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin and Singapore Health Minister Ong Ye Kung agreed that travel between the two countries should resume as the Covid-19 situation in both nations had stabilised.

At a press conference yesterday, Khairy said a protocol was being developed to ensure the safety of travellers and prevent overcrowding at entry points.

"Foreign travellers are required to fulfil various prerequisites before entering Malaysia, including downloading and activating the MySejahtera app and undergoing a RT-PCR Covid-19 test two days prior to departure.

"If travellers show no symptoms of Covid-19 through the thermal scanner at the airport, they can immediately proceed to Immigration counters. All Covid-19 screening facilities at Kuala Lumpur International Airport and klia2 will be closed from April 1."

He said travellers could undergo professional RTK tests at two private healthcare facilities at the airport or at centres outside the airport within 24 hours of arrival.

He said failure to do so would cause their MySejahtera status to turn red and they would not be able to enter business premises and they faced deportation.

He said travellers were required to have Covid-19 insurance before entering the country and would be sent to private healthcare facilities if they test positive.

Children aged 6 and under were not required to undergo Covid-19 tests, he said.

He was previously reported as saying the ministry would shorten entry processing time from about one hour to 35 to 45 minutes.

On reports that some European Union countries were not recognising the Sinovac Covid-19 vaccine, Khairy said Putrajaya would seek clarification from the EU delegation to Malaysia.

"Sinovac vaccine recipients are allowed to enter many countries.

"They are allowed in the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia, no problem."

He said the public could request from Health Ministry facilities additional doses of vaccine from brands approved by EU countries for travel purposes.

Khairy said MySejahtera would soon be listed as one of the apps accepted by EU countries as proof of vaccination.

On Wednesday, *Utusan Malaysia* reported that Sinovac was not on the list of approved vaccines for foreign travellers entering some European countries.

Sinovac vaccine recipients may be considered unvaccinated and may need to quarantine upon arrival in those countries.

Page 1 pic: An aerial view of a fully illuminated Causeway from Johor leading to Singapore.