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Retail groups question rationale for restaurants with bar service to close by 11pm in Selangor

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KUALA LUMPUR (Oct 3): Retail groups have questioned the rationale for restaurants with bar service to close by 11pm beginning from today as announced by the menteri besar (MB) of Selangor.

In a joint statement today, the Malaysia Retailers Association (MRA), Malaysia Retail Chain Association (MRCA) and Malaysia Shopping Malls Association said they were perplexed by the sudden change of operation hours as all businesses were allowed to operate up to 2am previously.

“We are all deeply concerned with the sudden spike in [daily new] Covid-19 cases in the past two days, and the industry and business community are supportive of actions that will mitigate the spread of the pandemic.

“However, we believe the sudden change in operation hours for a selected category of business is not the solution but detrimental to efforts to recover, revive and survive with the reopening of the economy,” they said.

The groups said closing at 11pm would have no relevance to the steps required to stem the spread of the disease.

“Strict observation of the standard operating procedures (SOPs) by everyone from individuals to businesses is the key to contain the spread of the disease.

“There is no correlation between operating hours of bistro-bar businesses with the spike in Covid-19 cases, and this instruction is very disruptive and detrimental to the recovery process.

“We therefore seek the Selangor menteri besar’s (MB) urgent review of the change in operation hours for this selected sector of the F&B (food and beverage) industry, and to allow all types of businesses, especially those in the F&B industry, to operate common allowable operating hours in order not to cause further losses detrimental to the restart, recovery and revival process towards sustainable survival,” they said.

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