

# Business groups want RMCO to continue

## NATION

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PETALING JAYA: Major business groups in the country have implored the government to stay vigilant in the Covid-19 battle.

Their call comes amid the soon-to-end recovery movement control order (MCO) period, slated for Aug 31, pending further announcement by the government.

“Although business must go on to stimulate the economy, it is also important to take necessary safety measures as Covid-19 is expected to be around for some time,” said Malaysia Retail Chain Association president Shirley Tay.

“Until and unless a proven vaccine is made available, we must remain very careful and vigilant, and continue taking precautions such as wearing masks, avoiding overly crowded areas, maintaining personal hygiene and keeping a physical distance.

“The move from MCO to recovery MCO has helped retailers conduct and normalise their businesses to a certain extent.

“But our members still want a certain extent of control. Otherwise, allowing total flexibility may lead to another MCO being enforced if there is an increase of infected cases.

“Though it may cause some inconvenience, it is better than having none at all,” she said when contacted.

SME Association president Datuk Michael Kang said the government should not be too quick to ease restrictions.

“Perhaps we should look at another version of MCO as Malaysia is still not ready to ease restrictions to ensure a safe exit post-Covid-19,” he said.

The standard operating procedure (SOP), he said, should be kept in place at least until the end of the year.

Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) president Tan Sri Soh Thian Lai said the government, particularly the Health Ministry, would be in a better position to know whether to extend or end the MCO based on the data, especially in light of reports on new clusters emerging and virus mutations.



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“Given recent developments, it is necessary for the SOP to be adhered to and enforced to ensure consistent compliance by the public.”

On the part of FMM, he said they were urging members to continue to be on guard even after the recovery MCO, regardless of whether the government ends it or continues with another version of the MCO.

“In any case, it is important that the current infections and clusters are managed effectively and the chain of infection is broken.

“The economy and the business sector will not be able to take another round of lockdowns as it will have a devastating impact, threatening business survival and job security,” said Soh.

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