



MEDIA STATEMENT

THE HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER

ECONOMIC SECTOR FACILITIES AND PRIVILEGES

On August 8, I announced social sector privileges for individuals who are fully vaccinated. The privileges include inter-state or district movement for long-distance couples, long-distance children for Phase 1 of the National Recovery Plan (NRP) and inter-district, dine-in and outdoor sports activities for states in Phase 2 of the NRP and beyond.

I also take note that some restaurant operators have displayed information on the number of employees who have received complete vaccinations to help customers choose the premises they want to visit. There are also premise owners who want to wait until all their employees are fully vaccinated before starting dine-in activities to create a safer premise environment.

This development is in line with my recommendation on August 8 that the people who have received a complete vaccination can make a personal risk assessment rationally in facing the threat of COVID-19 virus even though the Government has allowed some form of privileges.

However, I am also aware that some are disappointed because they do not have the opportunity to take advantage of the privileges announced, especially the residents in the states in Phase 1 of the NRP. Although this frustration is very much understood, but every decision to provide these privileges must be made with caution and taking into account our country is still in a pandemic situation.

NRP Coordinating Minister YB Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul bin Tengku Abdul Aziz has explained that the main goal of Phase 1 of the NRP is to reduce the number of daily cases, increase vaccination rates, encourage each state to move to Phase 2 and most importantly to reduce bed use rates in Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The government through the Greater Klang Valley Special Task Force (GKVSTF) and the COVID-19 Immunization Special Task Force (CITF) is indeed working hard to alleviate the situation in the Klang Valley.

Alhamdulillah, Director General of Health Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah in a press conference on 13 August 2021 stated that Operation Surge Capacity in the Klang Valley since July 26 has seen the rate of admission of COVID-19 patients to hospitals for all age groups began to show a decline.



We have also begun to see positive initial developments from the National COVID-19 Immunisation Program (PICK) in several states, namely the Federal Territory (FT) of Labuan, Sarawak, Negeri Sembilan and the Klang Valley states (Selangor, WP Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya). Yesterday for the first time, no new cases of COVID-19 infection were reported in FT of Labuan.

Data collected by the MOH shows that so far, all the states mentioned have started to show a decrease in the number of cases for categories 3 to 5 when the complete dose coverage of COVID-19 vaccine for the adult population (18 years and above) has exceeded 40 per cent.

At the same time, data from the Crisis Preparedness Response Center (CPRC) for the Hospital showed that the situation in the Emergency Department in the Klang Valley has also improved. For example, the average number of patients waiting in the Emergency Department to be placed in patient wards for MOH hospitals in the Klang Valley has decreased.

As of July 31, 2021, the average daily patient waiting in the Emergency Department was 909 people. Alhamdulillah, as a result of the Government's careful planning and the implementation of strategies by the MOH as well as the effects of vaccination, the average number of patients waiting per day has decreased to 239 people on 13 August 2021.

I sincerely hope that this downward trend will continue and be able to reduce the burden of serious COVID-19 cases as well as the admission of patients to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). However, the capacity of patients in the ICU is still full as the treatment of patients in the ICU is much more complicated and takes longer than in a normal ward.

Therefore, immediately register for vaccinations, including for pregnant women and adolescents in age groups that have been decided by the Vaccination Access Assurance Committee. Employers also need to play a role in ensuring that their employees including foreign workers get vaccinated.

As I stated earlier, the Government through the Special Sitting of the National Security Council (NSC) always considers other privileges by emphasising on three main aspects, namely the health and safety of the people; people's economy and business sustainability; as well as the well-being of the people.

The government understands that many economic activities have been disrupted and various desires cannot be fulfilled as a result of this pandemic, including buying household items other than basic necessities and cutting of hair as well as various other activities desired. The government is aware, the longer this matter is restricted, the greater the risk to the mental and physical health of the people.



The government also sees that it is very important for the economic sector to reopen in stages because if it is not started now, the impact especially on business owners and their employees will be worse.

It is important to note that these latest privileges that I will announce will apply to all phases of NRP provided that **the complete vaccination rate of the adult population in the state must have reached at least 50% and individuals** wishing to implement these privileges must also have received complete vaccinations.

For example, as of 14 August 2021, the complete vaccination rate for the adult population (18 years and above) in the Klang Valley has reached 64.7 percent. Therefore, **individuals who have been fully vaccinated in the Klang Valley can take advantage of these privileges when these come into effect.** Detailed guidelines for the facilities that I am announcing will be issued by MKN in the near future.

TRADE AND DISTRIBUTION SECTOR PRIVILEGES FOR PHASE 1 OF NRP

In this regard, after taking into account the risk assessment data conducted by the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH), Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) and after discussing with all stakeholders, the Government agreed to **provide accommodations in the trade and distribution sector effective 16 August 2021, involving 11 types of economic activities that will be allowed to resume operations in Phase 1**, namely:

1. Car wash shop
2. Electrical and electronics stores
3. Store household goods and kitchen utensils
4. Furniture store
5. Sports equipment store
6. Car accessories store
7. Car distribution and sales centre
8. Morning market and farmers market only
9. Clothing, fashion and accessory stores
10. Jewellery store
11. Barber shop and beauty/salon centre (basic barber services only)

For clothing, fashion and accessory stores; jewellery stores; as well as barbershops and beauty centres/salons (basic barber services only), there are additional health SOPs that **MUST** be followed. It includes wearing gloves, limiting business time between employees and customers and not allowing the use of fitting rooms. These SOPs may be complicated but they are for the safety of employees and customers.



Owners of premises listed in these businesses **must also ensure that customers who enter the premises MUST show a COVID-19 digital vaccination certificate** to prove that the individual has received a complete vaccination. Again, the meaning of complete vaccination is 14 days after the date of injection of the second dose for the two-dose type vaccine, and 28 days after the date of injection for the single dose type vaccine.

TRADE AND DISTRIBUTION SECTOR PRIVILEGES PHASE 2 OF NRP

The Government also agreed to allow 11 economic activities in the trade and distribution sector to resume operations in Phase 2 effective 16 August 2021. All 11 economic activities are in addition to the 11 economic activities allowed to resume operations in Phase 1. Economic activities they are as follows:

1. Photographic goods store and photographic services;
2. Second hand shops;
3. Florists and nurseries;
4. Handicraft and souvenir shops;
5. Antique shop;
6. Toy store;
7. Carpet store;
8. Creative content store and creative industry equipment;
9. Outdoor equipment store (including camping, fishing and other equipment);
10. Cosmetics, skin care and perfume stores;
11. Tobacco stores (including vape and electronic cigarettes);

Owners of premises listed in this re-operational business must also ensure that **customers who enter the premises MUST show a COVID-19 digital vaccination certificate** to prove that the individual has received a complete vaccination.

OPERATING PRIVILEGES FOR THE MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION, MINING AND QUARRYING SECTORS

In the meantime, I would also like to inform that the Government has agreed to **allow all non-essential activities in the manufacturing, construction, mining and quarrying sectors to resume operations starting 16 August 2021 in Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3 states in the NRP**. Yet the operating capacity is dependent on the complete vaccination rate of the workers.

Complete vaccination rates of workers	Operating Capacity
80% - 100%	100%
60%-79%	80%
40%-59%	60%



The government understands that this decision will draw various reactions from the public who are concerned about the risk of infection. Again, it is made clear that every ruling is made with care. After more than a year that the country is in a pandemic situation, many employers had to reduce the workforce, causing many to lose their jobs. In this difficult situation, the government cannot allow this situation to drag on.

To employers, the Government hopes that the facilities announced today can revitalize their enterprises. I would like to remind all employers to comply with and meet the conditions that have been set before resuming operations to ensure the safety of employees and the workplace is guaranteed. At the same time, take full advantage of the wage subsidy initiatives provided by the Government to ensure that every employee receives their salary payment.

To employees, report immediately to the Ministry of Health Malaysia at cprc@moh.gov.my or the Ministry of Home Affairs (KDN) at aduan.sop@moha.gov.my or the Ministry of Human Resources through the Working For Workers (WFW) application if the employer does not comply with the prescribed SOPs. Power is in your hands as an employee because an employer who does not comply with SOPs and violates the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 (Act 342) can be compounded and brought to court.

Under this Act as well, the MOH has full power to give notice of order to close the premises. I understand from the period of July 26 to August 10, over 900 premises were ordered to close due to failure to comply with the SOP. This is proof that the Government is very firm against any party who violates the rules. Special thanks to the people and employees who made complaints as well as facilitating the authorities to carry out enforcement.

PERMISSION TO VISIT PUBLIC RECREATION PARKS FOR LEISURE PURPOSES

Meanwhile, to ensure the well-being of the people is preserved, especially in efforts to reduce stress and ensure mental health well-being, the Government also agreed to allow **public recreational parks for the states in Phase 1 of the NRP to be opened for recreational activities effective 16 August 2021.**

But remember, **ONLY activities that can be done individually such as jogging, cycling and exercising are allowed, in line with the sports and leisure SOPs in Phase 1 of the NRP.** The public is also only allowed to visit public recreational parks in the neighbourhood. Do not cross states or districts to go to other recreational parks.

This permission is very important for people to get more time to be in the open and have a better ventilation system than just confined at home. So, I really hope that this privilege is not abused.



I would like to emphasise that the Local Authority (PBT) and related agencies responsible for monitoring compliance with SOPs in these public recreational parks, must be fully responsible for the implementation of the facilities provided to ensure it is implemented in accordance with the rules and guidelines that have been set to avoid harm.

TOURISM BUBBLE DESTINATION PIONEER PROJECT

As a preliminary information, the Government is examining the views and feedback from stakeholders on plans to make Langkawi Island as a pilot project for a tourism bubble destination. This plan is important for the Government to revitalise the tourism industry after more than a year affected by the pandemic.

MOH and health experts have advised the Government to implement this plan only when the complete vaccination rate of the population of Langkawi Island reaches at least 80 percent of the total population.

Meanwhile, the group allowed to travel to Langkawi Island will be limited to individuals who are fully vaccinated. This proposal is being studied by the Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, YB Dato 'Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri and will be finalized through a series of discussions after this.

Apart from Langkawi Island, the Government also has plans to implement a tourism bubble approach in more destinations especially at locations that has a good method of controlling the movement of tourists such as other resort islands around the country.

However, this matter is still at the planning stage and the Government will look at the results of the pilot project (Langkawi Island) first. If all goes well, God willing the tourism bubble will be implemented more widely.

CONCLUSION

The government hopes that the privileges announced today will not only provide some relief to the people in terms of emotional and mental health but also help to gradually restore the situation, especially groups involved in the economic sector.

I would like to emphasise once again that **every ministry and agency that monitors the facilities, including the owners of the premises, MUST BE FULLY RESPONSIBLE for the implementation of the privileges** provided to ensure that it is implemented in accordance with the rules and guidelines that have been set and avoid harm.



The Government will not hesitate to withdraw these privileges provided in the event of non-compliance with the guidelines and SOPs that have been set. If there is an infection in the premises that receive these privileges, the MOH will immediately take appropriate measures including re-assessing the risk and not rule out the possibility of immediately closing the premises or areas involved as well as issuing compounds to parties identified as violating SOPs.

Once again, I would like to remind, the facilities provided do not mean that the people have gained absolute freedom. Every SOP, guideline and procedure must be adhered to as best as possible.

The practice of wearing face masks, practicing physical distancing and maintaining personal hygiene must also be continued by every segment of society. The COVID-19 virus is still in the environment and we must continue to fight together to fight it to the end. God-willing, we will win together.

Wabillahi al-taufiq wal hidayah wassalamu'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

YAB TAN SRI DATO' HAJI MUHYIDDIN BIN HAJI MOHD YASSIN PRIME MINISTER

15 AUGUST 2021