



Pay your IWK bills **anywhere, anytime,** through IWK application, online banking or credit card



Home » Business » News » Businesses want clear and fair SOPs

Businesses want clear and fair SOPs



Friday, December 11th, 2020 at , Business | News



While the retail segment finds relief, others like wedding and event companies say they have been left out in the dark

by **NUR HANANI AZMAN** / pic by **RAZAK GHAZALI**

COMMERCIAL activities have picked up since the government eased travel restrictions under its latest Movement Control Order (MCO) announced last week, but some sectors feel left out because of ambiguous standard operating procedures (SOPs).

While the retail segment, especially food and beverage (F&B) and shopping malls, found relief, others like wedding and event companies say they have been left out in the dark.

Much of their problem comes from the government’s SOPs that are constantly changing and there is no easy way to keep up with what businesses can or cannot do. Covid-19 SOPs are announced by the defence minister, usually via a live telecast.

Association of Wedding Professionals Malaysia president Leticia Hsu said the SOPs tend to be unclear and keep changing on a daily basis – it’s hard to keep up.

She suggested that the government engage each segment of the economy to come up with SOPs that are suitable and cater to their industry, so that businesses are allowed to operate safely.

“I wouldn’t expect the SOPs to be able to accommodate each industry if there is no expert opinion.

“Everyone just wants events and weddings to go on, so guidelines are followed to ensure that the pandemic is kept in check,” she told *The Malaysian Reserve (TMR)*.

In Penang, Hsu said the wedding business was recovering fabulously before the recent Conditional MCO (CMCO). She had believed that business would continue to improve almost to pre-Covid levels even under the Recovery MCO (RMCO).

TO FRONTLINERS, WE SALUTE & THANK YOU

“For Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, there are no events or wedding receptions, which is fatal for planners here,” she said.

Travel restrictions have impacted the economy, with the government estimating a RM300 million GDP loss per day under the CMCO.

SME Association of Malaysia president Datuk Michael Kang said there is confusion among its members whether hotels now are allowed to organise an event or not.

He said clear and equal SOPs for organising events are needed immediately so small and medium enterprises can restart business.

“If not, this is a big loss for them. We see political parties having meetings at hotels during CMCO. This is unclear. Why can someone organise and others cannot?

“Everyone should be able to enjoy the same SOPs,” he told *TMR*.

For some businesses, customers do not want to book events or rooms for fear that restrictions will force them to cancel.

Events Wizard Sdn Bhd events director Loh Tjun Hong said the current SOPs sometimes change from one day to the next, making it difficult for clients and organisers to plan.

“The SOPs for states where CMCO is lifted help organisers plan for smaller events and will slowly recover.

“However, clients are still hesitant as they worry that we will be put under CMCO/MCO at a moment’s notice,” he told *TMR*.

He said events are pretty much stagnant for states which are still under CMCO and Covid-19 numbers not budging (Selangor and Kuala Lumpur).

Malaysian Association of Hotels CEO Yap Lip Seng said the SOPs are unclear due to different MCO implementations for different areas.

He said confusion arises from the lack of guide or steps in determining SOPs in force for various areas, as well as the constant change in the status of different zones.

“As per SOPs dated Dec 7, restrictions are strictly set differently for CMCO and RMCO areas. Events are allowed under RMCO, as per specific SOPs for social events.

“While for the CMCO, it (event) is not allowed apart from meetings using meeting facilities,” he told *TMR*.

Meanwhile, Bumiputera Retailers Organisation president Datuk Wira Ameer Ali Mydin said retailers are happy with the latest SOP requirement as it is now more flexible.

“The F&B industry players are relieved with no limit on the number of customers allowed per table at restaurants, as previously only 40% capacity is used.

“Overall, the current SOPs are better than before,” he told *TMR*.

Malaysian Muslim Restaurant Owners Association president Datuk Jawahar Ali Taib Khan is also happy with the latest SOPs as the business now sees sales improvement from 40% to 60% at the moment.

Understanding the current situation, Jawahar said they did not ask for 24-hour operation, but seek an equal timing across the state.




LEADING UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE GROUP

WWW.MMC.COM.MY

Top stories

Proton to launch in five markets next year

by NUR HAZIQAH A MALEK/ FILE PIX
Proton Holdings Bhd will launch in ...more

Petronas reduces stakes in MISC, KLCCP Stapled Group

by NUR HANANI AZMAN/ FILE PIX
PETROLIAM Nasional Bhd (Petronas) ...more

Companies need to take care of employees to survive pandemic disruption

By LYDIA NATHAN / Pic BLOOMBERG
COMPANIES must take care of employees ...more

AMMB, Bursa, Maybank rank as top PLCs in Malaysia

By S BIRRUNTHA / Pic By RAZAK GHAZALI
AMMB Holdings Bhd, Bursa Malaysia ...more




LEADING UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE GROUP

WWW.MMC.COM.MY