



Everyone have to play their role in breaking COVID-19 chain – FMM

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 15 -- The Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) fully agrees that it is everyone's effort to play a role in breaking the COVID-19 chain by adhering to standard operating procedures (SOPs) and enhancing the test, report, isolate, inform and seek self-assessment.

However, FMM President Tan Sri Soh Thian Lai said the government should come out with a different and targeted approach instead of punishing the majority of companies in Malaysia, which are micro small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), struggling to survive.

In a statement today, he said this is following a proposal by the Health Ministry (MoH) to amend legislation Sector 25 of Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 (Act 342) by increasing the compound value.

Soh said based on the latest data as of June 2021 in Malaysia Statistical Business Register released by the **Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)**, MSMEs accounted for 97.3 per cent of the total 1.19 million companies.

"The business fraternity is still reeling from the impact of the various lockdowns and most companies have yet to bring their businesses back to sustainable levels.

"With a maximum fine of RM1 million for compoundable offences or up to RM2 million for offenses to be prosecuted in courts, companies especially MSMEs may be forced to close down as they cannot afford to pay such hefty fines," he said.

He said FMM is also greatly concerned about the inconsistent interpretation of the SOPs by enforcement officers that occurred during the Full Movement Control Order period as the higher fines from the amendments to the Act 342 might create opportunities for abuse of power and corruption.

Hence, he said FMM would appreciate further consideration on concerns raised by the industry and welcome further engagement with MoH to discuss recommendations for a win-win outcome to combat the pandemic.

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