

Sabah turning to zoning system: Masidi

KOTA KINABALU: As Sabah reaches the 60 per cent mark in fully-vaccinated adult population, the State Government will turn to the zoning system, said State Covid-19 spokesman Datuk Masidi Manjun.

“Since we have reached the 60 per cent threshold, we will return to the zoning system in which Sabah will be divided into six zones, and residents in zones with 60 per cent vaccination rate can travel, except for districts who haven’t reached this percentage,” he said during his winding-up speech at the State Assembly sitting.

He said the move was discussed with the State Health Director who agreed to proceed with liberalisation in a controlled manner and in phases.

“This is the first step, so if a certain district has not reached the 60 per cent target, then the population there cannot move,” he said.

According to Masidi, the government plans to lift cross-district restrictions after the State reaches at least 70 per cent of vaccinated adults.

Touching on interstate travel, Masidi said he was confident Sabah can reach the 90 per cent target by October, which was the requirement set by the Federal Government before interstate travel is allowed. “The vaccination rate for Sabahans is actually higher than official figures since some of them are in the peninsular and received their vaccinations there,” he said.

He further underlined the importance to maintain vigilance against Covid-19 by expediting vaccination efforts to increase coverage and protect the population from the disease.

“The downtrend of cases is a good sign but we must never let our guard down since the virus is still within the community,” he said, and warned the risk posed by new variants which was responsible for the rise of cases in neighbouring Sarawak.

Masidi said the inoculation rate would be higher if vaccinated Sabahans residing in Peninsular Malaysia were included in the vaccination rate statistics.

“There are many Sabahans residing in the Peninsula that are a part of the statistics as Sabahan residents.

“For example, there are 171,963 food baskets that have been distributed to Sabahan household heads (KIR) that are in the Peninsula.

“Many Sabahans have been vaccinated in the Peninsula. Therefore, the vaccination rate of Sabahans is actually higher than what the current data presents,” he said.

Citing the Statistics Department, Masidi said Sabah’s adult population amounts to 2,758,400 individuals.

“Sabahans in the Peninsula that have been vaccinated are estimated to be around 200,000 people. Therefore, the actual vaccination rate for Sabahans is higher,” he said.

He added that as of Sept 21, 144,248 teenagers aged 12 to 17 have completed at least their first dose of the vaccine.

Sabah saw a new record-high of Covid-19 fatalities with 87 deaths on Wednesday, despite hitting a new low of 1,199 cases since Aug 6.

Masidi said Sandakan recorded the highest death tally with 24 deaths, followed by 14 deaths in Tuaran, six in Kota Kinabalu, five each in Lahad Datu and Keningau, four in Kota Marudu and three each in Ranau and Kota Belud.

He said Beaufort, Kinabatangan, Penampang, Beluran, Semporna and Papar each recorded two deaths while Nabawan, Kalabakan and Tongod each recorded one case.

“This number of deaths did not necessarily occur in the last 24 hours. Some deaths take time to be verified and only reported after the actual date of death,” said Masidi in a statement, Wednesday.

Kota Kinabalu topped caseload with 150 cases, followed by Sandakan (102), Lahad Datu (100), Pitas (70), Keningau (66), Tuaran (63) and Papar (63).

“The lower caseload corresponds with the number of districts recording a downward trend of cases. 15 districts have recorded a decrease while only 11 recorded an increase in cases. Kuala Penyu recorded zero cases

“Kota Kinabalu did not record a significant increase (+2). There are six cases involving detainees and seven cases involving offshore platform workers in Kota Kinabalu,” said Masidi.

He said out of the caseload, 479 are overdue cases from two to three days ago, 67 cases are from four to five days ago and 12 from more than five days ago.

“Close contacts continued to be the largest contributor with 720 cases (60.1 per cent) followed by 367 symptomatic cases, accounting for 30.6 per cent of the caseload,” he said.

Of the caseload, 15 cases involved babies less than a year old, 109 involved one to five-year-olds, 133 involved six to 11-year-olds, 125 involved 12 to 17-year-olds and 707 involved 18 to 59-year-olds, whereas 110 cases involved those aged above 60 years.

The caseload also comprised 1,146 Malaysians and 53 non-Malaysians, 1,181 local cases and 18 imported cases, while 628 are unvaccinated and 503 have completed both doses.

Masidi said category two infections make up the bulk of the caseload with 951 cases, while 209 are in category one, nine in category three, eight in category four and four in category five. 18 cases are still being evaluated.

Some 1,478 Covid-19 patients have been discharged from the hospital while 3,820 patients are currently receiving treatment at hospitals, low risk quarantine and treatment centres (PKRCs), prisons/temporary detention centres and private facilities.

Masidi said 171 patients are under critical care, with 136 in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU)/repurposed critical care as well as 35 in the open ward (high dependency ward (HDW)/acute cubicle), with 60 needing ventilator support.

Meanwhile, Kg Rompon, Tambunan will be placed under Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO) from Sept 24 to Oct 7 while existing EMCOs in Kg Lohan Ulu, Ranau, Kg Pengalat Kecil, Papar as well as Kg Ulu and Kg Pasir Putih in Putatan will be lifted on Sept 23.

<http://www.dailyexpress.com.my/news/178433/sabah-turning-to-zoning-system-masidi/>