Businesses step up to support vaccination plan

myBurgerLab, myPizzaLab and Inside Scoop reward customers who flash proof of registration on MySejahtera with discounts

by SHAHEERA AZNAM SHAH / pic by ARIF KARTONO

UP TO 3.8 million Malaysians have registered for the Covid-19 vaccination programme amid high anticipations for the public to break the chain of virus transmission.

Since March 5, the government has introduced four more registration channels, on top of the MySejahtera app, for people without smartphones.

The new mediums, which include a website and hotline number, have been opened for registration from March 5.

The government is expected to issue certificates to those who have been vaccinated.

To assist the government in encouraging the public to get on board the vaccination programme, burger chain myBurgerLab, pizza restaurant myPizzaLab and popular ice cream parlour Inside Scoop had been rewarding their customers who flashed their proof of registration on MySejahtera with discounts.

However, not all businesses share the same sentiment as many retailers are struggling to stay afloat, said Malaysia Retail Chain Association secretary general Stan Singh.

Stan said a large number of retailers are still dealing with bank loans, repayment cycle and implementation of standards operating procedures.

“Members of the association still cannot decide whether they will support the programme as there are still some reservations on the vaccines.

“The masses will only get vaccinated beginning June or July until next year, which is quite a long way to go.

“At the moment, giving discounts to encourage people to register for the vaccination programme is not something retailers are prioritising,” he told The Malaysian Reserve.
He added that even with the arrival of the vaccines, retailers found it difficult to predict a positive growth trajectory for their businesses due to the massive pressure caused by the pandemic.

“One of the things that the government could do is to extend the Temporary Measures for Reducing the Impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Act 2020 (the Covid-19 Act), which will expire this month.

“Only then, hopefully, it will give the retailers some security to support the vaccination programme,” he said.

Meanwhile, the Malaysian Employers Federation ED Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan said the vaccination programme will help restore confidence across all businesses, including employment.

“Take what happened during the pandemic period for example, the people’s confidence level to be physically in society took a dive. Consumers were not willing to spend, and a lot of business and services had to be closed.

“With this vaccine, hopefully, businesses could expand to the way they were, new businesses could emerge and more employment created,” he said.

Despite the positive sentiment, Shamsuddin said the association does not foresee employers incentivising workers to participate in the country’s vaccination programme.

“The vaccines are free and that alone is an incentive for people to get vaccinated.

“I do not think employers need to come up with that kind of incentive and would not go to the extent of putting the programme as a factor in employability. At the end of the day, it is an individual decision,” he said.