

THE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE BALANCING ACT

“Lives vs Livelihood”

Wisma MAH, Ampang (2 Mar 2021) – Recent statement by the Ministry of Health caused much unrest in the industry, particularly tourism, solely dependent on domestic tourism at the moment, with little to hope for as long as interstate travel is still restricted. The announcement by Senior Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob today affirmed the Government’s decision to extend interstate travel ban but fortunately to allow inter district travel from 5 March onwards.

Coincidentally captains of the industry attended an engagement meeting with the Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture on the same day, and even presented contingency plans should the Government decide to extend travel restrictions. On top of proposals already submitted to the Government, the Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) also suggested to allow interstate travel for attendees and participants of Meetings, Incentive, Convention & Exhibition or Business Events. This can be managed with official letters from organisers or the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB).

“Today’s announcement can be seen as a step forward, with the lifting of full MCO at key states, as well as allowance of inter district travel, the industry can look forward to a little bit more room to breathe. The tourism and hotel industry is still hopeful for the Government to allow interstate travels soon, the key to the industry’s survival,” said Ms Christina Toh, Secretary General of MAH.

The states of Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Penang, Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Kedah, Perak and Kelantan will be placed under Conditional MCO from 5 March to 18 March, while Melaka, Pahang, Terengganu, Perlis, Sabah, Putrajaya and Labuan will move into Recovery MCO.

“This is a good sign for now and perhaps by the 18th of March, situation might improve further and the Ministry of Health could possibly consider allowing interstate travel again,” Christina added.