

Punish politicians by raising fines on SOP breach, says MMA

By **Ian Khoo** - December 7, 2021 8:15 AM

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MMA president Dr Koh Kar Chai says politicians still openly flout SOPs as shown at the recent Melaka elections. (Bernama pic)

PETALING JAYA: Higher fines should be imposed on politicians who breach Covid-19 restrictions during the Sarawak elections, says Malaysian Medical Association president Dr Koh Kar Chai.

He said high compliance with election SOPs were needed even though Sarawak had a high vaccination rate. "Most important of all is for the politicians who will be campaigning to set a good example and adhere to the SOPs."

He called for fines for SOP offenses to be increased on politicians as the amount of the compounds (fines) are currently not a big enough deterrent. "A number of politicians still openly ignore SOPs as we have seen in the lead up to the Melaka polls," he told FMT.



Dr Koh Kar Chai.

Koh said it would be unreasonable this time to expect parties to do virtual campaigns as many rural areas lack internet access, so basic SOPs should be strictly followed and crowds should be avoided.



Dr Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj.

He suggested that the government publish copies of the Sarawak election SOPs frequently as well as air briefings of SOPs on TV and radio.

Parti Sosialis Malaysia chairman Dr Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj said the health ministry should study whether the measures taken during the Melaka election were sufficient.

However, he believes the health ministry will be able to handle the Sarawak elections, unlike the Sabah elections last year which caused

a new surge in Covid-19 cases arising from politicians and campaigners travelling to Sabah and back.

Jeyakumar suggested that community leaders endorse the health ministry's SOPs to ensure that they were followed by local residents as well as ensure the government is fair in its implementation.

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