

PRESS RELEASE : WEDDING INDUSTRY - EFFECTS OF COVID-19

Like so many other sectors of the economy, the wedding industry too has taken a hit due to Covid-19 and the resultant Movement Control Order (MCO). The Department of Statistics noted that in 2018, there were 206,253 weddings in the country, so one can imagine how large the wedding industry is, supporting the livelihood of many micro-entrepreneurs that cover the many segments of the wedding industry, including some of the following :

- Wedding planners.
- Photographers.
- Cinematographers.
- Gown designers.
- Custom tailors.
- Makeup artists.
- Florists.
- Decorators.
- Cake designers.
- Stationers and printers.
- Entertainers and masters of ceremonies.

Other than the micro-entrepreneurs, these segments also form part of the wedding ecosystem :

- Hotels.
- Restaurants.
- Convention Centres.
- Caterers.
- Publishing houses that print wedding magazines and run online wedding portals.

With the implementation of the MCO, the wedding industry has ground to a halt as weddings cannot take place at present. However, it is also alarming to note that couples are also not planning for weddings in the future due to the uncertainty of when the MCO will be lifted and also the uncertainty on what protocols that the government will issue in relation to mass gatherings post MCO. For the wedding industry to survive and resume post MCO, we will need to encourage and ensure that couples continue planning for their weddings post MCO. And couples will only likely do so when the following can be determined and announced by the government :

- The government's position on mass gatherings.
- If mass gatherings are allowed, what are the maximum numbers of people allowed per gathering, in particular for wedding celebrations.
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that need to be put in place, monitored and adhered to during weddings.

And once such guidelines and protocols are announced by the government, it will then allow all of us in the wedding industry to undertake the following :

- Brief couples on the necessary steps to be taken for their wedding celebrations.
- Collaborate amongst ourselves i.e. vendors as well as venues, to ensure that all the SOPs are implemented and adhered to during weddings.
- Start reviving the wedding industry by encouraging couples to start planning for their weddings with a clear direction, and making bookings with wedding vendors as well as venues.

For our part, in order to keep the wedding industry afloat, most of us are communicating messages that appeal to soon-to-be-married couples to have the following mindset :

- That their dream wedding can still happen in the not too distant future.
- That their wedding planning process can continue during the MCO.
- That wedding vendors and venues are on hand to assist with their wedding plans, on a virtual basis for now.
- That many vendors and venues are offering promotions and special deals now, which will help couples stretch their wedding budget.

It is also our hope that the media will be able to support the wedding industry with some positive coverage, be it the proactive measures we have taken, such as submitting a letter jointly signed by the associations below to the Minister of Economic Affairs highlighting the plight that the industry is facing as mentioned above, or the positive messaging that we have been communicating to all soon-to-be-married couples via social media and marketing channels. We would also be happy to arrange for any online interviews which you may wish to conduct with any of our vendors and venues for a more in-depth understanding of the current state of the wedding industry.

PATRICK LOW

President – Wedding Professionals Association of Malaysia (WPAM) (NSID-007-01112019)

Email: patricklow@wpam.org.my

LETICIA HSU

President – Association Of Wedding Professionals (AWP) (2260-09-SEL)

Email: Leticia@awpmalaysia.org

LOW CHIN SIANG

President – Penang Wedding Professionals Association (PWPA) (PPM-029-07-30082018)

Email: info@pwpa.org.my

RUDY HIRWAN

President – Malay Wedding & Portrait Photographers Malaysia (MWPPM) (PPM-010-10-18012012)

Email: mwppmmalaysia@gmail.com

Peh Leong Seng

President – Malaysian Gifts & Premium Association (MGPA) (PPM011101602009)

Email: enquiry@mgpa.org.my