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Covid's not done, so Vietnam's not done with it

By **Le Nga** | October 25, 2022 | 10:39 pm GMT+7



Pills of Covid-19 antiviral molnupiravir are produced at the Boston Vietnam company in the southern province of Binh Duong, February 23, 2022. Photo by VnExpress/Quynh Tran

The Covid-19 situation remains unpredictable, so an announcement that the pandemic is over can lead to negligence and unpreparedness against threats like new strains, says the health ministry.

Phan Trong Lan, head of the General Department of Preventive Medicine, said Tuesday that Vietnam would face two challenges if it announces the pandemic to be over.

First, in the scenario that a dangerous Covid-19 strain arises, it could lead to more severe cases and deaths, eventually overwhelming the capabilities of the medical system.

"When we announce the Covid-19 outbreak to be over, certain mechanisms and policies in the Covid-19 fight would no longer be applied, for example the research, production, purchase and approval of vaccines, drugs and other medical products... under emergency state, which affects the deployment of Covid-19 prevention measures."

Second, the mobilization of society sections at multiple levels to fight the virus would no longer receive the level of attention it needs. Therefore, people may get complacent and the reactivation of certain administrative and social measures to fight the virus would become more difficult.

Lan was speaking in response to doctor Nguyen Lan Hieu's suggestion that Vietnam should declare [an end of Covid-19](#) in the country to save medical resources.

At a National Assembly session Saturday, Hieu, director of the Hanoi Medical University Hospital, requested that the government announces a shift in its Covid-19 fight, introducing clear policies to replace old ones. The shift would help limit resource loss while ensuring enough preparation should another outbreak of Covid-19 or another disease occur, he said.

But Lan said it's not time for that yet.

Globally, the Covid-19 situation is still developing in a complex manner around the world, and immunity gained either through infection or vaccination is waning over time. The



coronavirus is also mutating, creating new variants that could be more infectious and more likely to evade the immune system, he said.

At its latest meeting on October 13, the Emergency Committee of the WHO said the Covid-19 pandemic was still happening around the world and advised countries to ramp up their monitoring systems, as well as expand treatment capacities and vaccine coverage.

Vietnam is a responsible member of the WHO, and its effective Covid-19 fighting measures have contributed to the efforts of the global community in containing the novel coronavirus, Lan said.

So far, the Ministry of Health has loosened its Covid-19 prevention measures to make room for socio-economic growth. The situation has been brought under control and prevention measures have adapted to the "new normal" period. Vietnam currently records around 500 new cases a day on average, and the number of active severe cases is around 70.

Tran Dac Phu, senior advisor at the Public Health Emergency Operations Center, said Vietnam was executing a safe adaptation plan, and its main mission was to accurately assess risks.

"Too much control would lead to inappropriate investments, affecting the economy and social security," he said, adding that the stance on Covid-19 prevention nowadays was "neither too much nor too little."

Learn lessons from countries where Covid's endemic: NA committee

The National Assembly's Economic Committee has asked the government to look to other countries that have considered Covid-19 endemic, saying it would be "good experience" for Vietnam.



Long Covid at 12 months persists at 18 months, study shows

Most patients with Covid-19 who have lingering symptoms at 12 months are likely to still have symptoms at 18 months, new data suggest.



Vietnam has spent over \$3.3 bln to combat Covid-19: report



Vietnam has spent nearly VND79.7 trillion (\$3.32 billion), to combat the coronavirus pandemic for the past two years, according to a recent government report.



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If they don't declare the pandemic to be over now, then when will they? It looks like this is going to be an endless perpetual strain of nonsense.



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Okay so how many people die of road accidents per year in Vietnam?

How many people die of covid per year in Vietnam?

Everyday I see people on the road, no helmet, and 1 or 2 masks.

How would a mask provide any protection?



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Subsidiary of VnExpress

License number: 71/GP-CBC, Ministry of Information and Communications, September 22, 2021

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