

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
 MUKA SURAT : 5
 RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Nasional

Penularan COVID-19

PKP fasa ketiga tempoh penting tamatkan wabak

Pandemik boleh diakhiri berlandaskan perkembangan statistik semasa

Putrajaya: Fasa ketiga Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan (PKP) disifatkan tempoh penting yang berupaya menamatkan kewujudan wabak COVID-19 di Malaysia.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, ketika menaruh keyakinan terhadap perkara itu, berkata ia berlandaskan perkembangan statistik semasa penularan wabak terabit.

Sehubungan itu, katanya, kesinambungan kawalan yang menyaksikan kejayaan sehingga kes COVID-19 berupaya dikurangkan menerusi PKP fasa pertama dan kedua harus diteruskan pada fasa ketiga.

"JP Morgan sebelum ini jangkakan kita bakal berdepan peningkatan kes mendadak sebanyak 6,300 kes esok (hari ini), tetapi setakat jam 12 tengah hari tadi, Malaysia hanya mencatatkan 4,817 kes.

"Esok (hari ini) saya jangkakan jumlah keseluruhan positif COVID-19 kurang daripada 5,000 kes dan ia hasil keberkesanan PKP fasa pertama dan kedua.

"Setakat minggu ke-13, Malaysia masih dalam fasa pemulihan daripada penularan wabak COVID-19, tetapi kita akan terus pantau sebab kes belum berkurangan

lagi," katanya pada sidang media harian COVID-19, di sini, semalam.

Beliau berkata, kerjasama semua pihak amat diperlukan dalam usaha meratakan lagi lengkung kes, bukan hanya oleh Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM).

"Jika kita boleh melakukannya, ada kemungkinan kita akan terus mengurangkan kes, bukan hanya meratakan lengkung tapi mungkin menamatkan COVID-19 di negara ini," katanya.

Sehingga semalam, hampir separuh daripada 4,817 kes positif COVID-19 yang dilaporkan di negara ini sudah pulih sepenuhnya.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, sebanyak 2,276 kes atau 47.23 peratus

dibenarkan discaj daripada hospital dengan 168 kes pulih semalam.

Sehingga jam 12 tengah hari semalam, sebanyak 134 kes baharu dilaporkan, menjadikan jumlah kumulatif kes COVID-19 di negara ini adalah sebanyak 4,817 kes.

Katanya, ia menjadikan jumlah kes pesakit yang pulih daripada jangkitan itu melebihi kes baharu.

"Selepas kes kumulatif ditolak dengan kes discaj dan kematian, jumlah kes aktif dengan kebolehan jangkitan COVID-19 adalah 2,464 kes. Mereka sudah diasingkan dan diberi rawatan.

"Sehingga kini, 66 kes positif

COVID-19 dirawat di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU). Daripada jumlah itu, 36 kes memerlukan bantuan pernafasan," katanya.

Selain itu, katanya, satu kes kematian baharu turut dicatatkan, menjadikan jumlah kematian akibat wabak itu setakat ini 77 kes iaitu 1.6 peratus daripada keseluruhan kes.

"Kes kematian ke-77 (kes ke-2,797) adalah lelaki tempatan berusia 62 tahun dan mempunyai latar belakang penyakit jantung, darah tinggi dan penyakit buah pinggang.

"Beliau adalah kontak rapat kes indeks (kes ke-703) yang dirawat di Hospital Melaka pada 31 Mac lalu dan disahkan meninggal dunia



Dr Noor Hisham

pada 13 April, jam 9.15 pagi," katanya.

Semalam, BH melaporkan PKP boleh ditamatkan jika jumlah kes baharu COVID-19 di negara ini terus menurun, manakala kes sembuh meningkat mengatasi kes baharu bagi tempoh dua minggu berturut-turut.

Pakar epidemiologi, Prof Datuk Dr Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud, dilaporkan berkata, trend penurunan itu tidak boleh diukur dalam tempoh dua atau tiga hari, sebaliknya perlu selaras dengan tempoh inkubasi virus COVID-19 selama 14 hari.



Plasma darah diguna rawat pesakit kritikal

Putrajaya: Plasma darah yang disumbangkan ke Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) akan digunakan untuk merawat pesakit kritikal COVID-19.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata antibodi dalam plasma berkenaan akan diberi kepada pesakit COVID-19 yang berada di tahap kelima dan terpaksa bergantung kepada bantuan pernafasan.

"Kita akan gunakan pada pesakit di wad Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU)," katanya pada sidang media harian COVID-19, di sini, semalam.

Menyentuh status bekalan darah, Dr Noor Hisham mengakui Kementerian berdepan kekangan

menambah simpanan susulan Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan (PKP) yang dilaksanakan kerajaan ketika ini.

Selain itu, katanya, simpanan di Pusat Darah Negara (PDN) akan berkurangan menjelang Ramadan, sekali gus memerlukan pertambahan bekalan menerusi derma daripada orang ramai.

"Hospital dan klinik masih dibuka untuk orang ramai tampil menderma darah, malah mereka boleh berbuat demikian di PDN serta lokasi khas berdekatan.

"Contohnya, bilik khas derma darah di MidValley sentiasa menyediakan ruang untuk mereka tampil menderma," katanya.

Sementara itu, simpanan bekalan pakaian perlindungan peri-

badi (PPE) KKM setakat ini mampu bertahan selama dua minggu.

Dr Noor Hisham menjelaskan pihaknya sentiasa melaksanakan perolehan untuk menambahkan bekalan PPE menerusi tiga kaedah.

Katanya, langkah itu harus dilaksanakan dari semasa ke semasa kerana penggunaan PPE di kesan meningkat dari dua kali ganda kepada 10 kali ganda, berikutan penularan COVID-19.

"Kita sentiasa periksa simpanan bekalan PPE KKM di peringkat negeri dan hospital kerana kadar penggunaan meningkat berlipat kali ganda berbanding keadaan biasa.

"Oleh itu, kita membuat perolehan untuk tambah bekalan me-

nerusi tiga pendekatan," katanya.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, tiga kaedah yang digunakan untuk menambah bekalan PPE adalah bersandarkan perolehan pukal untuk semua negeri menerusi pengurusan di peringkat pusat.

Selain itu, katanya, perolehan dilaksanakan di peringkat negeri menerusi pejabat kesihatan dan berbekalkan penyaluran derma oleh pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO).

"Kita perlu tambah PPE sebab gunakan ia setiap hari, berbanding keperluan ventilator, justeru perolehan harus sentiasa dilaksanakan dari semasa ke semasa.

"Oleh itu, kita sentiasa alu-alukan derma daripada NGO untuk menambah simpanan bekalan se-

masa PPE," katanya.

Kepada soalan tenaga sukarelawan, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, Kementerian setakat ini menerima bantuan 64 petugas yang ditempatkan di wad COVID-19 dan 65 pakar daripada sektor swasta.

Beliau berkata, lebih 1,000 jururawat dan pegawai perubatan turut tampil menghulurkan tenaga untuk membantu barisan hadapan.

"Kita bekerja dengan mereka untuk perkhidmatan jangka pendek dengan meneliti kepakaran masing-masing.

"Sesiapa yang mempunyai kepakaran, khususnya bekerja di wad ICU akan ditempatkan di jabatan berkaitan dan ditawarkan kontrak enam bulan," katanya.

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

SELASA, 14 APRIL 2020 BH

Nasional

Penularan COVID-19

KKM kesan 25 kluster, subkluster dijangkiti virus

Kementerian terus aktif jalankan pengesanan, saringan

Putrajaya: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mengesan 25 kluster dan subkluster individu yang dijangkiti COVID-19.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata perhimpunan jemaah tabligh di Masjid Seri Petaling kekal sebagai kluster terbesar, mewakili 40 peratus daripada keseluruhan pesakit yang disahkan positif wabak berkenaan.

"Kluster lain kita sudah umumkan, tetapi masih ada kluster kecil yang kita belum umum."

"Oleh itu, kita jalankan pengesanan dan ujian saringan secara aktif, selain memberikan rawatan terbaik kepada setiap kluster," katanya pada sidang media harian COVID-19 di sini, semalam.

Menerusi perangkaan semasa, Dr Noor Hisham mengesahkan jumlah kes sporadik COVID-19 kekal 69 kes sejak survelan dilaksanakan pada Januari lalu.

Katanya, punca jangkitan semua kes sporadik itu tidak dapat dikesan, manakala penelitian lanjut mendapati ia tiada sejarah perjalanan ke luar negara atau pergaulan dengan individu berisiko tinggi.

Kelmarin, KKM mengenal pasti empat subkluster jangkitan COVID-19 membabitkan beberapa madrasah dan sekolah tahfiz susulan perhimpunan tabligh di Masjid Seri Petaling.

Dr Noor Hisham dilaporkan berkata, tindakan proaktif mengenal pasti subkluster berkenaan adalah bagi membantu pengesanan kontak rapat kepada kes indeks perhimpunan itu.

Masjid Seri Petaling di sini mengadakan ijtima tabligh pada 27 Februari hingga 1 Mac lalu yang dihadiri kira-kira 12,500 jemaah.

Subkluster berkenaan membabitkan madrasah di Jerantut, Pahang; Penanti, Pulau Pinang; Sungai Lui, Selangor dan

Jasin, Melaka.

Dalam perkembangan lain, Dr Noor Hisham menyanggah laporan COVID-19 mempunyai impak sama seperti HIV yang merencatkan sistem pertahanan badan dan tindak balas terhadap jangkitan antigen.

Beliau menjelaskan, wujud tujuh jenis koronavirus yang menjangkiti manusia dan terkenal sebelum ini seperti Sindrom Pernafasan Akut Teruk (SARS) serta Sindrom Pernafasan Virus Korona Asia Barat (MERS-CoV).

"COVID-19 ialah virus baharu membabitkan dua peringkat jangkitan. Ia tidak sama dengan HIV/AIDS kerana bagi COVID-19, peringkat pertama adalah jangkitan dan peringkat kedua ialah inflamasi atau keradangan."

"Kita cuba elakkan jangkitan masuk ke dalam rongga paru-paru dan sebagainya sebab virus itu akan masuk dalam sel dan mengakibatkan keradangan."

"Apabila berlaku keradangan, ini yang boleh membawa maut," katanya.

Dalam perkembangan berkaitan, dua subkluster saling berkaitan bagi jangkitan COVID-19

dikenal pasti di Kuantan.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, ia adalah hasil aktiviti tertumpu dijalankan Kementerian melalui pengesanan, penyaringan dan ujian ke atas kumpulan sasar berisiko tinggi.

Katanya, kluster individu dalam pemantauan (PUI) Bali di Kuantan itu membabitkan golongan pesakit dan beberapa anggota kesihatan dari sebuah pusat perubatan di Kuantan.

"Sehingga 13 April, sebanyak 20 orang sudah dikenal pasti dalam kluster ini iaitu 14 orang sedang dirawat di wad Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan (HTAA) Kuantan, dua orang sudah sembuh, tiga dirawat di unit rawatan rapi (ICU) dan seorang meninggal dunia (kes ke-1,575)."

"Daripada semua jumlah itu, terdapat tiga anggota kesihatan yang terlibat dalam kluster ini," katanya.

Beliau berkata, kes indeks (kes ke-4,684) bagi kluster itu mempunyai sejarah perjalanan ke Bali, Indonesia dan kemudian mempunyai kontak rapat dengan kes ke-1,575 iaitu abang kepada kes indeks.

Kementerian terus komited perbaharui teknologi kesihatan

Putrajaya: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) sentiasa mencari kaedah dan pendekatan terbaik dalam memperbaharui teknologi yang bakal membuka jalan lebih luas kepada sektor perubatan moden.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba, berkata KKM sedia menerima kerjasama pelbagai pihak untuk menjayakan matlamat itu.

Pihaknya berharap kolaborasi strategik yang sedia terjalin seperti antara KKM dengan Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) dan UEM Edgenda Berhad membangunkan peralatan dan kemudahan baharu, mampu meneroka sinergi terbaik untuk memacu hala tuju kerajaan.

Katanya, ia akan sentiasa diperbaharui menerusi inovasi yang dilhamkan anak tempatan dengan kerjasama KKM dan universiti tempatan.

"Keutamaan KKM dalam men-

dahulukan rakyat menjadi satu daripada visi utama saya ketika melafazkan akujanji menyandang jawatan ini.

"Perkara pertama dalam fikiran saya ialah memastikan segala keperluan dasar dan kemanusiaan dijadikan sebagai 'touch point' penting dalam menerajui kementerian ini.

"Sehubungan itu, KKM berusaha menggabungkan tenaga terbaik untuk melaksanakan penyelidikan dan menghasilkan penyelesaian kepada masalah semasa," katanya pada Taklimat Media Kolaborasi Strategik Inovasi Kejuruteraan Kesihatan, di sini, semalam.

Yang turut hadir, Ketua Setiausaha KKM, Datuk Seri Dr Chen Chaw Min dan Pengarah Bahagian Perkhidmatan Kejuruteraan KKM, Tauran Zaidi Ahmad Zaidi.

Dr Adham berkata, Bahagian Perkhidmatan Kejuruteraan KKM bertanggungjawab mengi-



Dr Adham (tiga dari kanan) mendengar taklimat daripada Ketua Unit FEMS & SP Edgenda Mediserve Sdn Bhd, Ir Mazlan Yusof (kiri) di Kementerian Kesihatan, Putrajaya, semalam. (Foto BERNAMA)

lhamkan inovasi teknologi untuk perubahan mengikut kesesuaian, khususnya untuk penggunaan dalam jangka masa pendek dan berkesan.

Justeru, katanya, Bahagian Perkhidmatan Kejuruteraan KKM meneroka kaedah alternatif menghasilkan alat bantuan pernafasan berteknologi cetakan 3D perubatan lanjutan.

Beliau berkata, kolaborasi bersama pihak UTM dan kerjasama Angkatan Tentera Malaysia (ATM) itu berjaya menghasilkan

prototaip pertama.

Katanya, prototaip itu akan sentiasa dibuat penambahbaikan dan ujian sepenuhnya bersama Institut Piawai dan Penyelidikan Perindustrian Malaysia (SIRIM) supaya dapat menyokong keperluan asas bantuan pernafasan bagi pesakit.

Sementara itu, Dekan Fakulti Kejuruteraan, UTM, Datuk Prof Dr Mohammed Rafiq Abdul Kadir, berkata prototaip peranti perubatan alat bantuan pernafasan menggunakan teknologi penceta-

kan 3D sudah boleh berfungsi dan dikemukakan kepada Pihak Berkuasa Peranti Perubatan (MDA) untuk diluluskan sebelum digunakannya.

Pihaknya membangunkan dua jenis peranti perubatan alat bantuan pernafasan menggunakan teknologi pencetakan 3D bernilai antara RM1,000 hingga RM4,000 untuk tujuan kecemasan.

Beliau berkata, reka cipia itu bukan untuk bersaing dengan alat bantuan pernafasan lengkap yang digunakan di hospital.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : LOKAL

Kuala Lumpur: Kes Covid-19 di negara ini terus mencatat perkembangan positif apabila jumlah pesakit pulih daripada wabak berkenaan semalam melebihi rekod jangkitan baharu.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, sebanyak 168 kes dilaporkan bebas daripada jangkitan Covid-19 dan dibenarkan pulang, sekali gus menjadikan individu yang pulih daripada

Jumlah pulih melebihi rekod jangkitan baharu

wabak terbabit sehingga kini ialah 2,276 orang atau 47.3 peratus.

Secara perbandingan, katanya, 134 kes baharu dilaporkan setakat jam 12 tengah hari semalam, menjadikan jumlah keseluruhan kes positif Covid-19 di Malaysia adalah 4,817 orang.

"Ini bermakna, bilangan kes dibenarkan keluar dari wad hari ini (semalam) juga

melebihi laporan kes baharu dan jumlah kes aktif masih dirawat adalah 2,464 kes.

"Sehingga kini, 66 kes positif Covid-19 sedang ditempatkan di unit rawatan api (ICU), daripada jumlah itu, 36 kes memerlukan bantuan

pernafasan," katanya pada sidang media harian, semalam.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, daripada maklumat terkini yang dilaporkan ke Pusat Kesiapsiagaan dan Tindakan Cepat Krisis Kebangsaan (CPRC), dukacita dimaklumkan

wujud pertambahan satu kes kematian berkaitan Covid-19, sekali gus merekodkan jumlah keseluruhan angka korban adalah sebanyak 77 orang atau 1.6 peratus.

Memperincikan status terkini Covid-19, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, satu kes kematian ke-77 (kes ke-2,797) ialah seorang lelaki warganegara Malaysia

berumur 62 tahun adalah merupakan kontak rapat kepada kes indeks (iaitu kes ke-703).

Katanya, beliau dirawat di Hospital Melaka pada 31 Mac lalu dan disahkan meninggal dunia semalam jam 9.15 pagi.

"Kementerian Kesihatan mengucapkan takziah kepada ahli keluarga mereka," katanya.

Jumlah keseluruhan angka korban adalah 77 orang



PADEMNIK COVID-19

NEORAH semasa di terminal. Beliau sudah selesai UTS yang ke-10 dan akan berangkat ke tanah air, semalam.



ANGGOTA polis menutup sekitar pekarangan pusat kuarantin di bandar raya Kuching.

Sarawak mahu percepat proses keputusan ujian

Petra Jaya: Proses untuk mendapatkan keputusan ujian sampel Covid-19 daripada individu dalam pemantauan (PUS) yang baru balik dari luar negara, Semenanjung, Sabah dan Labuan akan dipercepatkan bagi mengelak kesesakan di hotel tempat mereka di kuarantin.

Menteri Pelancongan, Kesenian, Kebudayaan, Belia dan Sukan negeri, Datuk Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah berkata, ketika ini seramai 1,063 individu ditempatkan di 13 hotel di seluruh negeri.

Oleh itu, katanya, keputusan ujian makmal terhadap sampel yang diambil daripada perlu mereka dipercepatkan bagi membolehkan individu lain pula di tempatkan di pusat kuarantin itu.

"Esok (hari ini) kita janga akan mendapat keputusan ujian makmal terhadap kumpulan pertama yang di kuarantin di hotel itu.

"Selepas mendapat keputusan, mereka yang diuji negatif mungkin dibenarkan keluar dan menghabis-

kan baki tempoh kuarantin di rumah pula," katanya pada sidang media di Wisma Bapa Malaysia di sini, semalam.

Abdul Karim berkata, lebih ramai lagi rakyat yang balik ke negeri ini dijangka ditempatkan di pusat kuarantin di hotel minggu ini.

Daripada 1,063 yang di kuarantin itu, seramai 116 ditempatkan di Kuching Hock Lee, Rajah Court Dormani (85), Kuching Park (78), Pullman (98), Miri Mega (81), Somerset Miri (45), Ostay Inn (15), Cosy Inn (40), Imperial Palace (145), Eastwood Resort (25), Imperial (8), Limbang Purnama (94) dan Bintulu Park City Everly (233).

Sementara itu, beliau berkata, Sarawak merekodkan tujuh lagi kes baharu positif Covid-19 semalam, menjadikan jumlah kes di Sarawak sebanyak 348 kes sejak kes positif pertama dilaporkan pada 13 Mac lalu.

"Semua tujuh kes positif baharu itu kini dirawat di Hospital Umum Sarawak," katanya.

Oleh Amir Abd Hamid dan Suraya Roslan am@hmetro.com.my

Kuala Lumpur

Ada 25 kluster dan subkluster yang dikategorikan oleh Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) berkaitan dengan jangkitan Covid-19 di negara ini.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, kluster yang terbe-



Ada 25 kluster jangkitan

Sri Petaling kes terbesar, insiden kecil belum diumumkan

sar adalah Sri Petaling iaitu kira-kira 40 peratus daripada jumlah keseluruhan yang direkodkan.

"Tetapi kluster lain juga sudah kita kenal pasti. Kluster besar sudah kita umumkan, kluster kecil belum diumumkan lagi namun pihak KKM memantau dan mengambil tindakan sewajar-

nya membabitkan pengesanan, pengujian, pengasingan serta memberi rawatan terbaik kepada kluster itu," katanya pada sidang media harian Covid-19 di KKM, Putrajaya, semalam.

Menurutnya, pesakit dijangkiti Covid-19 tidak sama dengan pesakit HIV/Aids yang menjejaskan ketaha-

nan dan tindak balas ketahanan badan.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, ada tujuh coronavirus menjangkiti manusia dan yang terkenal sebelum ini seperti Sindrom Penafasan Akut Teruk (SARS) serta Sindrom Pernafasan Virus Korona Asia Barat (MERS-CoV).

Menurutnya, Covid-19 ialah virus baharu memabatkan dua peringkat jangkitan.

"Ia tidak sama dengan HIV/Aids. Bagi Covid-19, peringkat pertama adalah jangkitan dan peringkat kedua iaitu inflamasi atau keradangan.

"Kita cuba elakkan jangkitan masuk ke dalam rongga paru-paru dan sebagainya sebab virus itu akan masuk dalam sel.

"Reaksi dari dalam badan akan mengakibatkan keradangan. Apabila berlaku keradangan, ini yang boleh membawa maut," katanya.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : MEMERANGI WABAK COVID-19

Covid-19: Jangkaan JP Morgan meleset

PUTRAJAYA - Jangkaan agensi penyelidikan JP Morgan bahawa angka positif koronavirus (Covid-19) di negara ini mengunjur meningkat pada pertengahan April ini ternyata meleset.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, setakat ini jumlah terkini pesakit positif wabak itu hanya 4,817 kes berbanding ramalan agensi berkenaan iaitu sebanyak 6,000 kes.

"Kes di negara ini berada di bawah paras 5,000 kes. Ini membuktikan pelaksanaan Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan (PKP) fasa satu dan dua boleh mencatatkan kurang daripada sasaran itu," katanya pada sidang akhbar di sini semalam.

Beliau berkata, negara meletakkan fasa pemulihan pada PKP ketiga bermula esok hingga 28 April ini.

"Minggu 13 (sejak dilanda Covid-19 akhir Januari lalu) kita dalam fasa pemulihan, namun kerajaan masih melakukan pemantauan memandangkan belum ada penurunan kes.

"Minggu ketiga ini sangat penting kerana kalau boleh kita mahu kurangkan kes, bukan sekadar melandaikan lengkukan, namun juga perlu tamatkan kewujudan Covid-19 di negara ini," katanya.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
 MUKA SURAT : 3
 RUANGAN : MEMERANGI WABAK COVID-19

SINAR HARIAN • SELASA 14 APRIL 2020

MEMERANGI WABAK COVID-19



25 kluster, sub kluster Covid-19 dikesan

Sebanyak 40 peratus daripada jumlah itu merupakan kluster perhimpunan Sri Petaling

Oleh TUAN BUQHAIRAH TUAN MUHAMAD ADNAN

PUTRAJAYA

Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) mengesan 25 kluster dan sub kluster jangkitan koronavirus (Covid-19) di negara ini. Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, sebanyak 40 peratus daripada jumlah itu merupakan kluster perhimpunan Sri Petaling. Beliau berkata, susulan aktiviti tertumpu yang telah dijalankan Kementerian melalui pengesanan, penyaringan, ujian ke atas kumpulan sasaran yang berisiko tinggi, KKM telah mengenal pasti dua sub kluster saling berkaitan di Kuantan.

“Kluster Person Under Investigation (PUI) Bali di Kuantan ini adalah satu kluster yang melibatkan golongan pesakit dan beberapa anggota kesihatan dari sebuah pusat perubatan di Kuantan,” katanya pada sidang akhbar di sini semalam.

Beliau berkata, sehingga semalam, seramai 20 individu telah dikenal pasti berada dalam kluster itu. “Sebanyak 14 daripadanya sedang dirawat di wad Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan (HTAA), Pahang; dua telah sembuh dan tiga dirawat di unit rawatan rapi serta seorang telah meninggal dunia (kes ke-1,575),” katanya. Menurutnya, kes indeks iaitu kes positif ke-4,684 bagi kluster ini mempunyai sejarah perjalanan ke Bali, Indonesia. “Dia mempunyai kontak rapat dengan kes ke-1,575 iaitu abang kepada kes indeks.



DR NOOR HISHAM

“Abangnya telah menjangkiti tujuh kes generasi kedua dan 11 kes generasi ketiga,” ujarnya. Sementara itu, beliau berkata, bekalan peralatan pelindungan diri (PPE) di Malaysia sekarang hanya mampu menampung kegunaan pasukan petugas kesihatan di hospital untuk tempoh dua minggu.

Menurutnya, pihaknya perlu mendapat bekalan berterusan bagi mengelakkan kekurangan stok PPE. “Kita sentiasa melaksanakan perolehan dari masa ke masa kerana didapati kegunaannya meningkat daripada dua kepada 10 kali ganda,” ujarnya. Katanya, bekalan PPE dibuat melalui tiga kaedah iaitu perolehan pukal untuk semua negeri menerusi kerajaan Pusat, perolehan peringkat negeri dan juga derma daripada badan bukan kerajaan (NGO).

Kes pulih kembali melebihi bilangan pesakit baharu

PUTRAJAYA - Selepas dua hari jumlah pesakit baharu melebihi kes pulih, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) kembali merekodkan bilangan discaj lebih tinggi semalam.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, sebanyak 168 kes telah dibenarkan pulang semalam sekali gus menjadikan jumlah kumulatif kes pulih sebanyak 2,276 kes. “Peratusan kes pulih adalah 47.23 peratus daripada jumlah keseluruhan,” katanya di sini semalam.

Menurutnya, terdapat 134 kes baharu telah dilaporkan semalam menjadikan jumlah kes positif Covid-19 di Malaysia adalah sebanyak 4,817 kes. Daripada keseluruhan kes positif, beliau berkata, sebanyak 2,464 kes masih dirawat di hospital.

Beliau berkata, Pusat Ke-siapsiagaan dan Tindak Cepat (CPRC) Kebangsaan merekodkan pertambahan satu kematian melibatkan lelaki berumur 62 tahun dan mempunyai penyakit kronik.

“Ini menjadikan jumlah keseluruhan kes kematian ialah 77 kes,” katanya. Sementara itu, Dr Noor

Hisham berkata, orang ramai digesa menderma darah bagi menampung keperluan menjelang Ramadan.

Katanya, orang ramai boleh mengunjungi Pusat Darah Negara, klinik kesihatan ataupun hospital bagi tujuan tersebut.

Menurutnya, selain mengunjungi fasiliti kesihatan tersebut, orang ramai boleh menderma darah di ruang derma darah yang ditetapkan di kawasan tumpuan.

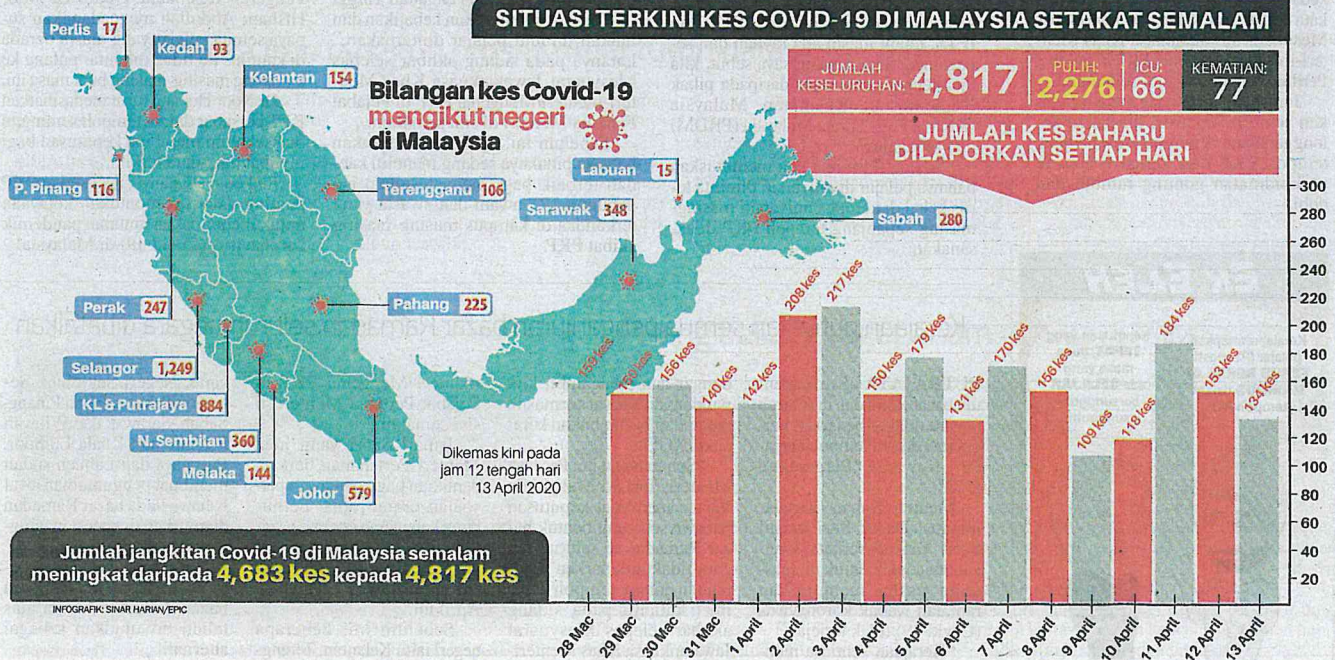
“Saringan kesihatan akan dilakukan terhadap penderma bagi memastikan penderma sihat dan bebas daripada penyakit berjangkit,” katanya.

Dalam pada itu, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, plasma darah daripada pesakit Covid-19 akan digunakan untuk merawat pesakit kritikal.

Menurutnya, ujian keberkesanan perlu dilakukan sebelum digunakan ke atas pesakit Covid-19.

“Masih awal untuk kata plasma boleh guna kepada pesakit kita. Kementerian perlu kan plasma dan gunakan antibodi yang dibina oleh pesakit dan kita gunakan pada pesakit tahap kelima yang terpaksa bergantung kepada bantuan pernafasan di wad ICU,” katanya.

SITUASI TERKINI KES COVID-19 DI MALAYSIA SETAKAT SEMALAM



AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 5

RUANGAN : MEMERANGI WABAK COVID-19

SINAR HARIAN • SELASA 14 APRIL 2020

MEMERANGI WABAK COVID-19

Inovasi baharu hadapi ancaman Covid-19

Kerjasama dengan agensi penyelidikan sebagai persediaan sekiranya wabak berada di tahap kritikal

PUTRAJAYA

Sebagai persediaan menepi pandemi koronavirus (Covid-19) sekiranya sudah ke tahap paling kritikal, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) bersama beberapa agensi penyelidikan dan khidmat teknikal kini mengadakan kolaboratif strategik.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba berkata, kerjasama itu membabitkan penghasilan inovasi baharu peralatan bagi menangani masalah kesihatan yang melanda dunia ketika ini.

Beliau berkata, tiga inovasi dihasilkan iaitu prototaip Peranti Perubatan Ventilator Menggunakan Teknologi 3D dan prototaip *Splitter Kit Ventilator* untuk kegunaan lebih daripada seorang pesakit serta Unit Rawatan Rapi Hibrid di Lapangan (FHyICU).

"Bahagian Perkhidmatan Kejuruteraan KKM telah menorka kaedah alternatif dengan menghasilkan ventilator berteknologi maju *3D Printing Medical*. Kolaboratif bersama Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) dan kerjasama Angkatan Tentera Malaysia (ATM) ini



Dr Adham (kiri) mendengar taklimat daripada Dekan Fakulti Kejuruteraan UTM, Prof Datuk Ir Dr Mohammed Rafiq Abdul Kadir (kanan) mengenai Ventilator 3D di Kementerian Kesihatan, Putrajaya semalam.

telah berjaya menghasilkan prototaip pertama," katanya pada majlis taklimat media mengenai kolaboratif strategik itu di kementerianya di sini semalam.

Dr Adham berkata, prototaip itu akan menjalani pengujian sepenuhnya bersama Institut Piawaian dan Penyelidikan Perindustrian Malaysia (SIRIM) agar dapat berfungsi untuk menyokong keperluan asas bantuan pernafasan bagi pesakit Covid-19.

Bagi prototaip ventilator teknologi 3D, katanya, objektif penghasilan ialah ventilator kos rendah menggunakan teknologi 3D dan perkakasan minimum bertujuan menyokong keperluan asas pesakit Covid-19 sekiranya jangkitan di negara ini sampai ke tahap kritikal.

"Pembangunan prototaip *splitter kit* pula bertujuan membolehkan sebuah ventilator digunakan oleh dua pesakit bagi menyokong keperluan pernafasan pesakit Covid-19 dengan memastikan tidak berlaku pemindahan jangkitan.

"FHyICU merupakan gabungan pembinaan unit rawatan rapi (ICU) dan wad isolasi secara mudah dipasang serta dibuka selain boleh dibina di lokasi diperlukan dengan kos yang efektif," katanya.

Dr Adham berkata, kerjasama itu akan menggembeng kepakaran tempatan dan antarabangsa.

"Keterujaan hasil kerjasama awal ini saya kongsi bersama dengan anda semua. Permulaan kejayaan ini perlu disebarluaskan kerana penting untuk kita semua ketahui," katanya. - *Bernama*

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 18

RUANGAN : NEGERI

JKN Pahang terima sumbangan 1,200 naskhah al-Quran

KUANTAN- Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri (JKN) Pahang semalam menerima sumbangan 1,200 naskhah al-Quran melalui Projek Wakaf al-Quran anjuran Yayasan Warisan Ummah Ikhlas (WUIF) bersama TV AlHijrah, *Sinar Harian*, Ideaktiv, Majlis Dakwah Negara dan Solidariti Ummah untuk Ummah.

Penyerahan disempurnakan Pengerusi Sekretariat Rumah Ngaji Pahang, Md Abdu Sahak dan diterima Pengarah Kesihatan Negeri, Datuk Dr Bahari Tok Muda Awang Ngah di Pejabat JKN Pahang, Indera Mahkota di sini.

Dr Bahari berkata, beliau menyambut baik sumbangan al-Quran itu kerana selari dengan Program Hospital Mesra Ibadah yang dilaksanakan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM).

Menurutnya, sumbangan akan diagihkan kepada hospital dan Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah (PKD) di negeri ini.

“Melalui sumbangan ini, insya-ALLAH dapat membantu masyarakat menyemarakkan dan membudayakan bacaan al-Quran terutama ketika berdepan musibah penularan koronavirus (Covid-19).

“Bagaimanapun, al-Quran ini bukan sekadar perlu dibaca sebaliknya difahami, dihayati dan diamalkan,” katanya ketika ditemui selepas majlis penyerahan al-Quran di sini semalam.

Dr Bahari berkata, dalam mendepani musibah Covid-19, umat Islam perlu kembali kepada ALLAH dan menjadikan al-Quran sebagai panduan.

Beliau turut memberi contoh al-Quran menekankan kepentingan menjaga kebersihan diri serta persekitaran dan perkara itu perlu dilakukan ketika mendepani wabak Covid-19.

Sementara itu, Md Abdu berkata, usaha WUIF dan rakan kerjasma lain



Md Abdu (kanan) menyerahkan sumbangan wakaf al-Quran kepada Dr Bahari di Pejabat JKN Pahang di Kuantan semalam.

dalam menjayakan Projek Wakaf al-Quran ini wajar diberi pujian.

Menurutnya, al-Quran adalah sumber rujukan umat Islam kerana banyak rahsia kehidupan tersingkap di sebaliknya tetapi

ada yang belum menemui jawapan kerana tidak memahami kandungan ayat.

“Apabila berlaku musibah, kita kena kembali kepada fitrah, Islam dan al-Quran,” katanya.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION

NewStraitsTimes . TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2020

6 NEWS / Nation

NEW DEVELOPMENT

BALI CLUSTER FOUND IN KUANTAN

Index case for cluster of 20 people is a patient who travelled to Bali, says Health D-G

PUTRAJAYA

THE Health Ministry has identified two related Covid-19 sub-clusters in Kuantan, Pahang, by tracing, screening and testing high-risk groups.

Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said the Bali cluster was detected in Kuantan among Persons Under Investigation, comprising several health workers from a medical centre.

"Up to April 13, we have identified 20 people in the cluster. Fourteen are being treated at Tengku Ampuan Afzan Hospital.

"Two have recovered, three are in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), and one (Case 1,575) has died," he said at his daily press conference yesterday.

He said of the total, three were healthcare workers.

He said the index case for the cluster was Case 4,684, who had travelled to Bali, Indonesia.

"The patient had close contact with Case 1,575, who is the patient's brother.

"Case 1,575 then infected seven generation two cases and 11 generation three cases."

Dr Noor Hisham said 339 close contacts had been identified and screened for Covid-19, including 202 healthcare workers.

Malaysia once again logged more recoveries than new infection cases.

Up to 6pm yesterday, 168 more patients had been discharged, bringing the number of recover-



Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah speaking at a press conference in Putrajaya yesterday. PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

ies to 2,276, or 47.3 per cent of the total number of cases.

Dr Noor Hisham said there were 134 new cases, bringing the cumulative total to 4,817.

"There are 2,464 active cases. The patients have been isolated and given treatment.

"Currently, 66 of them are in the ICU, with 36 needing respiratory assistance."

He said the National Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre reported one new fatality, bringing the death toll to 77, or 1.6 per cent of total cases.

He said the 77th death (Case 2,797) was a Malaysian man aged 52 with a history of cardiovascular disease, hypertension and kidney disease.

"He was warded at Melaka Hospital on March 31.

"The patient was pronounced dead on April 13 at 9.15am."

He said Malaysia was expected to avoid the exponential growth

in Covid-19 cases — more than 1,000 cases lower than predicted.

He said the number of cases in the country stood at 4,817, which was well below the 6,300 cases predicted by JP Morgan analysts. "Our target is to have fewer than the predicted 6,300 cases. We are doing much better.

"Perhaps we will have fewer than 5,000 cases tomorrow. Hopefully, we can keep the number under 5,000."

He said this was a sign that the first and second phases of the Movement Control Order (MCO) were working.

He said the country was in the recovery phase, but assured that the ministry was still closely monitoring the situation.

"The third phase of the MCO is important to bring the number down further.

"There is a chance to beat this — not just flatten the curve, but end Covid-19 in the country.

"This is not just the responsibility of the ministry, but all of us."

He said there were two stages to the Covid-19 infection — the first was infection and the second was inflammation.

"It's the inflammation that can sometimes bring death."

He said when patients were discharged, they were counselled on how to avoid reinfection.

He said recovered patients usually develop antibodies, and even though the antibodies might not prevent them from getting reinfected, the chances were low.

He said there were currently 25 Covid-19 clusters and sub-clusters in the country.

The Sri Petaling tabligh cluster remains the biggest one, accounting for 40 per cent of all cases.

The ministry has taken 23,915 samples from this group, 1,850 of which were positive.

Assistance given to off-campus students

➔ From Page 4

He said giving false hope would not help with students' wellbeing.

"We will do our best to keep students in high spirits. We need to stay where we are and do our part as responsible citizens.

"It's hard for everyone as we cannot go about our normal routines."

He said students were adjusting their habits by practising social distancing and avoiding crowded places.

The senior lecturer at UKM's Centre of Community Education and Wellbeing at the Faculty of Education said students were given breakfast, lunch and dinner daily.

Cafeterias at the university have come up with menus based on the Higher Education Ministry's guidelines.

"We allow caterers to use their creativity to prepare food for students as long as it is within the budget. It was interesting to see what they are capable of doing."

"Two days ago (Saturday), the students had lasagna. Yesterday (Sunday), they 'celebrated' the end of Phase Two of the MCO with barbecued chicken and grilled lamb," said Anuar. He urged parents not to worry about their children as they were well taken care of.

There are 1,400 students on campus. Assistance is also given to students off campus.

"We have details of all stranded students, on and off campus, and we put everyone in a group chat."

UKM's off-campus students are given daily essentials, such as rice, sugar, flour.

"If they need anything, they only need to let us know in the group and members from the action team will send necessities directly to them. This way, we get to monitor them in real-time.

"As college master, the wellbeing of students is our top priority. Although we don't see them every day face to face, every student has equal access to us.

"If a male student is having a tummy ache, we will call a medical response team who will come and check on him."

UKM's Health Centre is open 24 hours a day since the start of the MCO period. The university also mobilises its team of counsellors to regularly check on students' emotional wellbeing.

Selangor ruler: Suspend surau, mosque activities until May 31

SHAH ALAM: Sultan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah has decreed that the suspension of Friday and congregational prayers and religious lectures at mosques, surau and musollah (prayer rooms) in the state be extended until May 31 to contain the spread of Covid-19.

The sultan's private secretary, Datuk Mohamad Munir Bani, said a new directive would be issued if the outbreak eased

before the date.

"The decision to extend the suspension was made during a special meeting between the Selangor Islamic Religious Council and Selangor Islamic Religious Department today (yesterday).

"Friday prayers must be replaced with *zohor* prayers (at home), while *tarawih* prayers during Ramadan should be performed at home."

He said Sultan Sharafuddin

expressed concern that the 6.5 million people residing in Selangor could expose themselves to Covid-19 if preventive measures were not taken seriously.

The ruler advised the people to stay at home, ensure good personal hygiene and practise social distancing, Munir said, adding that everyone must adhere to the Health Ministry's guidelines.

He said the sultan expressed regret that fake news on the Covid-19 outbreak were being spread, which had caused anxiety among the people.

"Sultan Sharafuddin called on the people to continue praying for the wellbeing of the people and the state."

He said the sultan conveyed Ramadan greetings and wished all Muslims a blessed fasting month. **Bernama**

AKHBAR : THE STAR
 MUKA SURAT : 2
 RUANGAN : NATION

2 Nation

THE STAR, TUESDAY 14 APRIL 2020

New Covid-19 cluster detected in Kuantan

By JOSEPH KAOS Jr
 and RASHVINJEET S. BEDI
 newsdesk@thestar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: A new Covid-19 cluster has been detected in Kuantan which is responsible for one death and at least 20 infections.

Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, who disclosed this yesterday, said the index case for the cluster had travelled to Bali and later infected an elder

brother who died.

He said the cluster involved a group of patients and several personnel of a medical facility in the Pahang capital, with a total of 20 persons diagnosed with the disease.

"Of this, 14 are being treated at the Tengku Ampuan Afzan Hospital in Kuantan, with three placed in intensive care," Dr Noor Hisham said, adding that two patients have recovered and were discharged.

The DG said the deceased, identi-

fied as Patient 1,575, caused seven cases (second generation) and a further 11 third-generation cases.

"We have identified 339 people as close contacts, including 202 medical personnel, in this cluster. All have been screened," he said.

So far, Dr Noor Hisham said the ministry has identified 25 clusters and sub-clusters in the country.

The Sri Petaling tabligh cluster was the largest, making up about 40% of Covid-19 cases in the country.

Dr Noor Hisham said as for the "Italy cluster" in Kuching, there were five new cases detected bringing the total to 50 cases. Five people from one family have died from this cluster.

There were no new cases in the Kuching church cluster, Bandar Baru Bangi wedding cluster and Rembau district sub-cluster.

As for areas under the enhanced MCO, Dr Noor Hisham said there were eight new cases detected in



Bandar Baru Ibrahim Majid, making it a total of 163 cases in the Johor locality.

There were another 24 new cases in Hulu Langat, making it 240 cases in all, and 15 new cases in three locations close to one another in Kuala Lumpur, making it 125 cases.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NATION

4 Nation

THE STAR, TUESDAY 14 APRIL 2020

Health Ministry ready to build field ICUs for hospitals

By JOSEPH KAOS Jr
joekaosjr@thestar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: The Health Ministry is ready to build several field intensive care units (ICUs) to help ease the burden of hospitals in managing the Covid-19 pandemic.

Such buildings, which cost less than RM2mil, can be constructed within 25 days and can house up to 10 patients at one time.

The Field Hybrid Intensive Care Unit (HyICU) is currently being developed by the ministry in collaboration with UEM Edgenta Bhd, as

an alternative solution to support a possible increase in ICU demand.

"We have identified several hospitals that we can potentially install these field hybrid ICUs.

"At present, the ministry has enough ICUs to cope with the existing demand, but these field hybrid ICUs can be built in case there is a sudden spike in the number of Covid-19 patients requiring ICU support," said the ministry's Engineering Services director Tauran Zaidi Ahmad Zaidi.

The design of the field hybrid ICU is simple but efficient, and is

equipped with electrical supply, a donning room, a nurse station, air conditioning and ventilation system.

Tauran Zaidi said the field hybrid ICU was inspired by the same technology that was used by the military to build field hospitals.

"The construction of this field ICU is done at a factory and therefore does not require renovation at existing hospitals. This way, there would be no interruption to existing ICU wards," he told a media briefing on the ministry's strategic collaborations on health

engineering innovation.

The event was launched by Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba.

Other innovations that were unveiled at the programme were a prototype ventilator built using 3D printing technology as well as a prototype "splitter kit" for ventilators.

The prototype ventilator is inspired by an innovation called "VentilAid" introduced by engineers from Poland. The ventilators are cost-efficient and can be constructed easily using 3D printing technology.

"We have enough ventilators at our hospitals at the moment, but this prototype ventilator can be an alternative to support our Covid-19 patients in case there is a surge in demand for ventilators," said Tauran Zaidi.

The splitter kit for ventilators is inspired by the military, which uses a similar device to allow more than one person to share one ventilator.

Both the prototype ventilator and splitter kit are currently in development stage, and are being designed by the ministry in collaboration with Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

THE STAR, TUESDAY 14 APRIL 2020

Covid-19: Current situation globally

(As of 7pm April 13, 2020)

	Malaysia											
	New cases											
	Total cases											
	Total deaths											
	Total recovered											
	134	4,817	77	2,276								
Asean+	S. Korea	India	Japan	Philippines	Indonesia	Thailand	Singapore	Vietnam	Brunei	Cambodia	Myanmar	Laos
Confirmed cases	10,537	9,240	7,370	4,932	4,557	2,579	2,532	262	136	122	41	19
Deaths	217	331	123	315	399	40	8	0	1	0	4	0
Recovered	7,447	1,096	784	242	380	1,288	560	145	107	77	2	0
Global Top 10	US	Spain	Italy	France	Germany	UK	China	Iran	Turkey	Belgium		
Confirmed cases	560,433	169,496	156,363	132,591	127,854	84,279	83,135	71,686	56,956	30,589		
Deaths	22,115	17,489	19,899	14,393	3,022	10,612	3,343	4,474	1,198	3,903		
Recovered	32,634	64,727	34,211	27,186	64,300	588	77,874	43,894	3,446	6,707		

'We are doing better than predicted'

Noor Hisham: Cases a lot less than projections

By JOSEPH KAOS Jr
joekaosjr@thestar.com.my

Watch the video thstartv.com

PUTRAJAYA: As April reaches its midpoint, the Health Ministry says Malaysia has been doing better than predicted in managing the Covid-19 pandemic.

Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said the country's current tally of 4,817 Covid-19 cases is a lot less than many expert projections.

"JP Morgan had forecasted that by April 14, which is tomorrow, Malaysia would have 6,300 Covid-19 cases. But today, we have 4,817 cases. By tomorrow, we might have fewer than 5,000 cases.

"We are certainly doing much better than predicted," he said at the ministry's daily Covid-19 press conference here.

Dr Noor Hisham said Malaysia's

ability to reduce the number of infections in the country was down to the effectiveness of its movement control order (MCO), which has been in place since March 18.

"This shows that the first and second phases of the MCO is working and showing signs that we have successfully contained the spread of Covid-19.

"However, we have not managed to bring down further the number of cases. So this third phase is important.

"We want to end the spread of Covid-19 in the country and this requires the work of not just the ministry, but all of us, together,"

said Dr Noor Hisham.

On whether the ministry is doing enough testing, Dr Noor Hisham said its experience with areas under the enhanced MCO showed that only 0.5% were found positive when active case detection was conducted.

"We have screened 83,488 people in the country, and only 4,817 were found to be positive. This translates to 5.8%, and it is well below the World Health Organisation's recommendation of 10%.

"But at the enhanced MCO areas, we screen everybody, whether or not they are symptomatic, or from high-risk groups.

"And we found that from screening every single person, we were only able to detect 0.5% positive cases.

"So if we test only targeted high-risk groups, we will get a better

Star Frontliners Initiative

Our healthcare professionals are putting their lives at risk on the front lines. Donate today to help them get essential medical supplies and equipment.



Donate via e-banking:
Bank: Public Bank Berhad | Account no: 3199849230
Account name: Star Foundation - Medical Fund

Donate via credit card:
Visit www.starfoundation.com.my

Donation deadline:
25 April 2020

For queries and tax exemption receipt, email starfoundation@thestar.com.my or contact 1-300-88-7827



outcome using the limited resources that we have, rather than conduct tests on every single person," said Dr Noor Hisham.

Yesterday, Dr Noor Hisham announced 134 new Covid-19 cases,

bringing the country's cumulative total to 4,817 cases.

With 2,276 recoveries and 77 fatalities so far, there are a total of 2,464 patients currently being treated in Malaysia.

Health experts divided over Covid-19 peak

By ASHLEY TANG
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Today marks the end of the first four weeks that Malaysia has been under the movement control order (MCO).

Although close to a month has gone by since the introduction of rules to curb the spread of Covid-19, health experts are divided on whether the country has seen the peak of the disease, which had resulted in 4,817 confirmed cases as at noon yesterday.

Universiti Sains Malaysia medical epidemiologist and biostatistician Assoc Prof Dr Kamarul Imran Musa believes that the actual number of Covid-19 cases in Malaysia is higher right now - as much as four to 10 times more than the number of confirmed cases - because there are asymptomatic cases (people infected with the virus but do not have symptoms of the disease) that are not being tested.

"The peak of infection reflects the highest rate of the spread of the virus, but it is very unlikely we would see a classic pointed peak of Covid-19 spread in Malaysia.

"This is because the number of new confirmed cases hover between 110 and 200 daily and the spread of the infection in the community has stabilised," he said.

Dr Kamarul added that Malaysia



Preventive measures: Two men preparing to disinfect a hotel near the Selangor Mansion and Malayan Mansion flats in Kuala Lumpur on Day 27 of the MCO.

seen in South Korea as the Koreans had tested aggressively from the beginning, thus leading to a rapid decrease in its infection rates.

"I expect in Malaysia's setting, we would stay in this 'peak' for a much longer time," he said.

In a March 23 research paper, investment bank JP Morgan forecasted that Malaysia's peak infections would happen in mid-April with about 6,300 cases.

Several experts back then said the forecast was conservative.

Dr Kamarul noted that Covid-19 cases would fall if the country could break the transmission of the virus.

"The constant number of new cases between 100 and 200 per day indicates that the infection is still spreading within the community but the good thing is that the rate of infection has stabilised," he said.

He said the MCO had to a certain extent halted the speed of infections in the country.

Without it, Dr Kamarul said, Covid-19 would have spread at a much greater rate.

Universiti Malaya virologist Prof Dr Sazaly Abu Bakar said it would take another two weeks to know whether Covid-19 had peaked or not.

"Now that we have loosened the restrictions by allowing certain sectors of the economy to start working again, I don't know what's the impact. The next two weeks will be critical for the country. If we don't see a downward trend, that means we have not been able to push the infections down," he said.

Like Dr Kamarul, Dr Sazaly believed that the actual number of positive cases in the country was unknown because of the lack of aggressive testings.

"All those numbers that have been reported every evening could be misleading as they relate to

symptomatic patients who require treatment in the hospital.

"As for those who are positive but are asymptomatic, we don't know how many of them are out there because we don't do aggressive testing.

"Due to that, we don't know where the trend is heading," he said.

He added that the number of Covid-19 cases in the country was currently "fluctuating upwards rather than downwards".

"If it fluctuates around 80 to 90 cases per day, then it is okay. It means that it is fluctuating down. But in the last two weeks of the MCO, it has still been fluctuating at the higher end. The trend is still upwards," he said.

Universiti Putra Malaysia medical epidemiologist and biostatistician Assoc Prof Dr Malina Osman said she could not be sure whether the disease had peaked in Malaysia.

In fact, she cannot rule out the possibility of a third wave of new cases.

Dr Malina said the new cases could come from sub-clusters from identified major clusters, those returning from overseas, non-citizens (such as refugees), neighbouring countries, and even frontliners.

However, she believed that active cases and new cases could be seen plateauing in the country, adding that active preventive actions would prevent a third wave.