

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 3

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Pemulihan COVID-19

Angka harian kes baharu kembali satu digit

9 jangkitan baharu meliputi 7 kes import babit lima rakyat Malaysia, dua bukan warganegara

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Kuala Lumpur: Angka harian kes baharu COVID-19 di negara ini kembali kepada satu digit dengan sembilan jangkitan dilaporkan, semalam.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata pertambahan setakat jam 12 tengah hari itu menjadikan bilangan kes positif di Malaysia kini

mencecah 8,985, manakala jumlah kes aktif dengan kebolehjangkitan COVID-19 pula 213.

Beliau berkata, sembilan jangkitan baharu itu meliputi tujuh kes import membabitkan lima rakyat Malaysia dan dua lagi bukan warganegara.

Tujuh kes import itu adalah dari India (dua kes di Selangor), Emiriah Arab Bersatu, Jepun dan Switzerland (masing-masing satu di Selangor) serta Filipina dan Pakistan (masing-masing satu di Perak).

"Bagi dua kes penularan dalam negara pula, satu membabitkan rakyat Malaysia dan satu lagi bukan warganegara.

"Penularan dalam negara membabitkan rakyat Malaysia itu adalah di Kedah daripada Kluster Pesakit Bawah Siasatan (PUI) Sivagangga, manakala bukan warganegara pula dikesan di Selangor daripada Kluster Bukit Tiram,"

katanya dalam kenyataan, semalam.

Menjelaskan lanjut, Dr Noor Hisham memaklumkan, Kementerian Kesihatan mengesan kes positif COVID-19 yang pertama di luar Johor bagi Kluster Bukit Tiram membabitkan bukan warganegara di Selangor.

Setakat jam 12 tengah hari semalam, katanya, seramai 135 orang sudah disaring berhubung kluster itu.

Daripada jumlah itu, beliau berkata, 10 kes dikesan positif, manakala 124 lagi negatif dan satu masih menunggu keputusan ujian saringan.

"Daripada 10 kes positif itu, empat adalah bukan warganegara Malaysia. Kes positif dilaporkan (kes ke-8,977), hari ini (semalam), adalah kontak rapat kepada kes positif ke-8,893 dari Johor.

"Melalui siasatan dan aktiviti pengesanan kontak rapat secara



aktif yang dijalankan Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah (PKD), kes positif ke-8,893 didapati menginap di rumah kes ke-8,977 pada 16 hingga 19 Julai lalu di Selangor.

"Justeru, beliau sudah dikenal pasti dan diberikan Perintah Pengawasan dan Pemerhatian di Rumah.

"Ujian saringan COVID-19 kali kedua dijalankan apabila kes ke-8,977 mengalami gejala batuk dan sakit tekak. Beliau dikesan positif dan kini dirawat di Hospital Sungai Buloh," katanya.

Setakat ini, sembilan kes positif bagi kluster itu dikesan di Johor, manakala satu lagi di Selangor.

"Kontak rapat bagi Kluster Bu-

kit Tiram membabitkan 125 orang, iaitu 69 di Johor, Melaka (11), Selangor (18), Kuala Lumpur dan Putrajaya (21), Terengganu (enam)," katanya.

Dalam pada itu, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, tiga pesakit pulih, semalam, menyaksikan jumlah kumulatifnya mencecah 8,647 kes (96.2 peratus).

Dua pesakit pula sedang dirawat di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU) dengan satu kes memerlukan bantuan pernafasan.

Tiada pertambahan kematian akibat wabak itu dilaporkan, semalam, menjadikan jumlah kumulatifnya kekal 125 kes (1.39 peratus).

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 5

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Hanya dua jenis tepati ciri WHO

Kuala Lumpur: Hanya dua jenis pelitup muka sahaja boleh digunakan bagi tujuan pencegahan COVID-19, manakala jenis fabrik tidak menepati ciri saranan Pertubuhan Kesihatan Dunia (WHO).

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata pelitup muka perubatan jenis tiga lapis, boleh digunakan orang awam yang mempunyai gejala saluran pernafasan.

Beliau berkata, golongan berisiko tinggi seperti warga emas (berusia 60 tahun ke atas) serta mereka yang mempunyai penyakit kronik seperti kencing manis dan darah tinggi juga disaran memakai pelitup muka perubatan.

"Pelitup muka bukan perubatan pula disyorkan untuk mereka yang tidak mengalami gejala, namun berada di tempat di mana penjarakan fizikal sukar diamalkan," katanya dalam kenyataan, semalam.

Dr Noor Hisham menjelaskan, pelitup muka bukan perubatan jenis fabrik ada di pasaran mungkin tidak menepati ciri-ciri yang disarankan Pertubuhan Kesihatan Dunia (WHO).

"Ia boleh dipakai untuk kegunaan orang awam tetapi keberkesanannya mungkin berbeza bergantung kepada jenis dan bilangan lapisan kain yang digunakan," katanya yang mengingatkan alat itu tidak boleh dikongsi dan perlu dilupuskan dengan betul.

Katanya, pelitup muka tidak boleh dipakai kanak-kanak berusia kurang dua tahun kerana boleh memberi kesan sukar bernafas dan tidak sedarkan diri, kurang upaya atau tidak dapat menanggalkan dengan sendiri.

Sementara itu, Timbalan Presiden Gabungan Persatuan-Persatuan Pengguna Malaysia (FOMCA), Mohd Yusof Abdul Rahman, berkata kerajaan perlu menetapkan satu piawaian khusus bagi men-

PEMAKAIAN PELITUP MUKA

Pelitup muka 3 lapis (3-ply mask) disarankan untuk



Pelitup muka fabrik (Fabric mask) disarankan untuk



 **Petugas kesihatan**

 **Orang awam yang mempunyai gejala saluran pernafasan**

 **Orang awam golongan berisiko tinggi yang berada di kawasan jangkitan COVID-19 dan penjarakan fizikal sukar diamalkan**

 **Warga emas (60 tahun ke atas)**

 **Berpenyakit kronik**

Golongan tidak mengalami gejala pernafasan dan berada di tempat jangkitan COVID-19 tersebar luas dan penjarakan fizikal sukar diamalkan

Golongan pekerja

Orang awam sihat yang berada di tempat awam



GrafikM

jamin kualiti pelitup muka yang dijual ketika ini.

"Ketika ini, tidak ada satu mekanisme khusus yang boleh memantau kualiti pelitup muka yang dijual. FOMCA menerima banyak aduan dan rungutan berhubung kualiti pelitup muka dijual, khususnya membabitkan tali dan material digunakan.

"Paling sering kami terima ialah tali yang mudah putus dan material cepat terkoyak. Ada juga yang terlalu nipis dan seakan tidak berfungsi untuk melindungi pemakai," katanya.

Mohd Yusof berkata, selain jenis pelitup muka, penekanan juga perlu diberi untuk melihat kewajaran penubuhan satu pasukan

husus bagi memantau kualiti alat itu.

Katanya, lambakan pelitup muka dalam pasaran ketika ini menyebabkan orang ramai sukar membezakan kualiti yang ada, melainkan apabila sudah dibeli.

"Kita sebenarnya boleh lihat berdasarkan harga diberi penjual. Jika harga ditawarkan itu jauh lebih murah daripada yang biasa dijual, berkemungkinan besar kualitinya juga rendah," katanya.

Sementara itu, Menteri Perdagangan Dalam Negeri dan Hal Ehwal Pengguna, Datuk Alexander Nanta Linggi, berkata pemantauan terhadap jualan dan pengeluaran pelitup muka setakat ini tidak mendapati sebarang elemen diskrimi-

nasi untuk kegunaan tempatan.

Beliau berkata, kerajaan mengambil keputusan menurunkan harga pelitup muka sebanyak 20 peratus, menjelang 15 Ogos ini bagi memastikan orang awam mempunyai kemampuan mendapatkan bekalan alat itu.

Sekarang ini, persoalan dan kebimbangan utama ialah mengenai pelitup muka buatan sendiri yang dijual secara dalam talian, yang kita tidak tahu sejauh mana keberkesanannya, berbanding jenis tiga lapis yang diwartakan sebagai barangan kawalan.

"Penjualan pelitup muka buatan sendiri dalam talian juga sukar dikawal kerana tiada larangan untuk berbuat demikian," katanya.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
 MUKA SURAT : 4
 RUANGAN : NEGARA

Enam individu langgar perintah pengawasan kuarantin di rumah

134 ditahan ingkar PKP

PUTRAJAYA – Sebanyak 134 individu ditahan kelmarin atas kesalahan ingkar arahan Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan (PKP) termasuk seorang individu atas kesalahan melanggar perintah pengawasan kuarantin di rumah (HSO).

Menteri Kanan (Keselamatan), Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob berkata, dari 27 Julai hingga semalam, enam individu dikenakan tindakan kerana gagal mematuhi prosedur operasi standard (SOP) kuarantin di rumah yang ditetapkan.

"Sebanyak 2,271 pemeriksaan dibuat semalam terhadap individu yang sedang menjalankan kuarantin wajib 14 hari di kediaman masing-masing," katanya dalam satu kenyataan di sini semalam.

Ismail Sabri berkata, seramai 3,384 individu pulang ke tanah air melalui pintu masuk sempadan antarabangsa sejak 24 Julai hingga 31 Julai lalu.

Mereka ditempatkan di 14 hotel dan lima Institut Latihan Awam (ILA) di Kuala Lumpur,



SERAMAI 20 lelaki dikompaun kerana tidak memakai pelitup muka semasa melepak di Bagan Ajam semalam.

Negeri Sembilan, Pulau Pinang, Kelantan, Sarawak, Selangor dan Johor.

"Mereka telah pulang dari 23 negara dan daripada jumlah itu, seramai 13 individu dihantar ke hospital untuk rawatan," katanya.

Sementara itu, katanya, pemantauan SOP solat Jumaat di 2,294 masjid semalam yang melibatkan 283,355 jemaah juga mendapati mengikuti garis panduan yang ditetapkan serta mengikut saiz keluasan masjid.

Dalam pada itu, di Pulau

Pinang, seramai 20 lelaki yang melepak di kawasan rehat dan rawat (R&R), Lebuhraya Lingkaran Luar Butterworth di Bagan Ajam, Butterworth antara individu terawal dikompaun kerana tidak memakai pelitup muka.

Angka Terkini Kes Covid-19 Di Malaysia sehingga semalam

	Jumlah
• Kes baharu	9
Import: 7 Tempatan: 2	
• Pulih	3
• Kematian	0
• Masih dirawat	213
• Jumlah kes sembuh	8,647
• Jumlah Kematian	125
Jumlah kes keseluruhan	8,985

Ketua Polis Daerah Seberang Perai Utara, Asisten Komisioner Noorzainy Mohd. Noor berkata, mereka yang berusia lingkungan 20-an itu masing-masing dikenakan kompaun RM1,000 selepas polis melakukan pemantauan kira-kira pukul 1.50 pagi semalam.

"Individu terbahit didapati sedang berkumpul dan melepak dengan tidak mematuhi SOP.

"Kegagalan itu menyebabkan mereka dikompaun kerana tidak memakai pelitup muka dan tiada penjarakan fizikal," katanya ketika dihubungi semalam.

9 kes baharu, 2 kluster catat satu kes

PUTRAJAYA – Sebanyak sembilan kes jangkitan Covid-19 direkodkan semalam termasuk tujuh kes import dan dua kes penularan tempatan melibatkan kluster aktif PUI Sivagangga, Kedah dan kluster Bukit Tiram, Johor.

Pertambahan kes itu menjadikan jumlah keseluruhan kes positif adalah sebanyak 8,985 dan kes aktif dengan kebolehan jangkitan sebanyak 213.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr. Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, kes yang dikesan di kluster PUI Sivagangga melibatkan seorang warganegara manakala kes di kluster Bukit Tiram adalah bukan warganegara yang dikesan di Selangor sekali gus menjadikannya kes pertama dikesan di luar Johor.

Beliau berkata, kes tersebut iaitu kes ke-8,977 merupakan kontak rapat kepada kes positif ke-8,893 dari Johor dan dikenal pasti melalui aktiviti pengananan kontak rapat secara aktif yang dijalankan oleh Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah.

"Berdasarkan siasatan, kes positif ke-8,893 didapati mengimport di rumah kes ke-8,977 di Selangor pada 16 Julai hingga 19 Julai.

"Mangsa dikenal pasti dan diberikan perintah pengawasan dan pemerhatian di rumah. Ujian saringan kali kedua dijalankan apabila kes ke-8,977 bergejala batuk dan sakit tekak sebelum dikesan positif dan kini dirawat di Hospital Sungai Buloh," katanya.

Mengulas lanjut, Noor Hisham berkata, setakat ini, sebanyak 135 individu telah disaring dan 10 kes didapati positif Covid-19 dengan sembilan daripadanya dikesan di Johor.

"Baki seramai 124 individu didapati negatif dan satu kes masih menunggu keputusan," katanya.

Sementara itu, beliau berkata, tujuh kes import adalah dari India, Emiriyah Arab Bersatu, Jepun, Switzerland, Filipina dan Pakistan yang membabitkan lima warganegara dan dua bukan warganegara.

Pakai pelitup muka perubahan jika bergejala

KUALA LUMPUR – Orang ramai yang mengalami gejala pernafasan disarankan untuk memakai pelitup muka perubahan jenis tiga lapis sebagai langkah untuk mencegah penularan Covid-19.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr. Adham Baba berkata, pelitup muka perubahan ini kebiasaannya digunakan oleh petugas kesihatan, namun juga disarankan bagi orang awam yang mempunyai gejala saluran pernafasan.

"Di kawasan di mana jangkitan Covid-19 berlaku dan penjarakan fizikal sukar diamalkan, pemakaian pelitup muka tiga lapis juga disyorkan kepada golongan yang berisiko tinggi.

"Golongan berisiko ini adalah seperti warga emas dan mereka yang mempunyai penyakit kronik seperti kencing manis dan darah tinggi," katanya dalam satu kenyataan semalam.

Katanya, bagaimanapun pelitup muka tidak boleh dipakai kanak-kanak yang berusia kurang dua tahun dan mereka yang sukar bernafas atau individu yang



ADHAM yang mengenakan pelitup muka perubahan.

tidak sedarkan diri serta individu kurang upaya atau yang tidak dapat menanggalkan pelitup muka tanpa bantuan.

"Orang awam yang tidak tergolong dalam kelompok terbahit, mereka digalakkan memakai pelitup muka bukan perubahan

ketika berada di tempat awam yang menyukarkan penjarakan fizikal seperti pengangkutan awam, tempat kerja dan kedai runcit.

"Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) mengesyorkan pelitup muka bukan perubahan jenis fabrik atau kain dengan tiga lapisan yang terdiri daripada lapisan paling dalam yang hidrofilik iaitu bersifat menyerap air misalnya kapas atau campuran kapas," katanya.

Ujarnya, pelitup muka bukan perubahan jenis fabrik di pasaran yang tidak memepati ciri-ciri disarankan WHO.

"Walaupun bagaimanapun, pelitup muka tersebut boleh dipakai untuk kegunaan orang awam tetapi keberkesanannya mungkin berbeza bergantung kepada jenis dan bilangan lapisan kain yang digunakan.

"Pelitup muka tidak boleh dikongsi dengan orang lain dan pelitup muka yang digunakan perlu dilupuskan dengan cara yang betul," tambahnya.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : MEMERANGI WABAK COVID-19

9 kes baharu direkod

Jumlah kumulatif kini mencapai 8,985 dengan kes aktif 213

KUALA LUMPUR

Sebanyak sembilan kes baharu positif koronavirus (Covid-19) dikesan semalam berbanding 12 kelmarin dengan tujuh daripadanya kes import dan dua lagi penularan tempatan. Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, pertambahan kes baharu itu menjadikan jumlah kumulatif kini 8,985 kes dengan jumlah kes aktif dengan kebolehan jangkitan sebanyak 213 kes. Menurutnya, kes import itu melibatkan lima warganegara dan dua bukan warganegara, manakala kes penularan tempatan pula masing-masing se-

rang warga tempatan dan warga asing.

"Perincian kes penularan dalam negara membabitkan warganegara adalah di negeri Kedah. Kes itu daripada Kluster PUI Sivagangga.

"Bagi kes bukan warganegara pula adalah di negeri Selangor dan kes itu daripada Kluster Bukit Tiram," menurutnya dalam kenyataan semalam.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, terdapat tiga kes pulih dan dibenarkan discaj semalam, menjadikan jumlah keseluruhan pulih sepenuhnya sebanyak 8,647 kes atau 96.2 peratus daripada jumlah keseluruhan kes.

Tambahnya, hanya dua kes positif Covid-19 sedang dirawat di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU), dengan satu daripadanya me-

merlukan bantuan pernafasan.

Tiada pertambahan kes kematian berkaitan Covid-19 dilaporkan semalam menjadikan jumlah kumulatif maut akibat wabak itu kekal sebanyak 125 kes atau 1.39 peratus daripada jumlah keseluruhan kes.

Mengenai satu kes baharu melibatkan kluster Bukit Tiram semalam, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, ia merupakan kes pertama kluster itu dikesan di luar negeri Johor.

Sehingga semalam, seramai 135 orang telah disaring bagi kluster Bukit Tiram dan daripada jumlah itu, sebanyak 10 kes termasuk empat bukan warganegara dikesan positif Covid-19, sementara 124 lagi negatif serta satu masih menunggu keputusan. - Bernama



DR NOOR HISHAM

Pakai pelitup muka bersama jaga kebersihan, penjarakkan fizikal

KUALA LUMPUR - Penggunaan pelitup muka perlu diamalkan bersama penjagaan kebersihan tangan dengan kerap dan penjarakkan fizikal yang selamat iaitu sekurang-kurangnya satu meter daripada orang lain.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, terdapat dua jenis pelitup muka yang boleh digunakan bagi tujuan pencegahan jangkitan koronavirus (Covid-19) iaitu pelitup muka perubatan dan pelitup muka bukan perubatan.

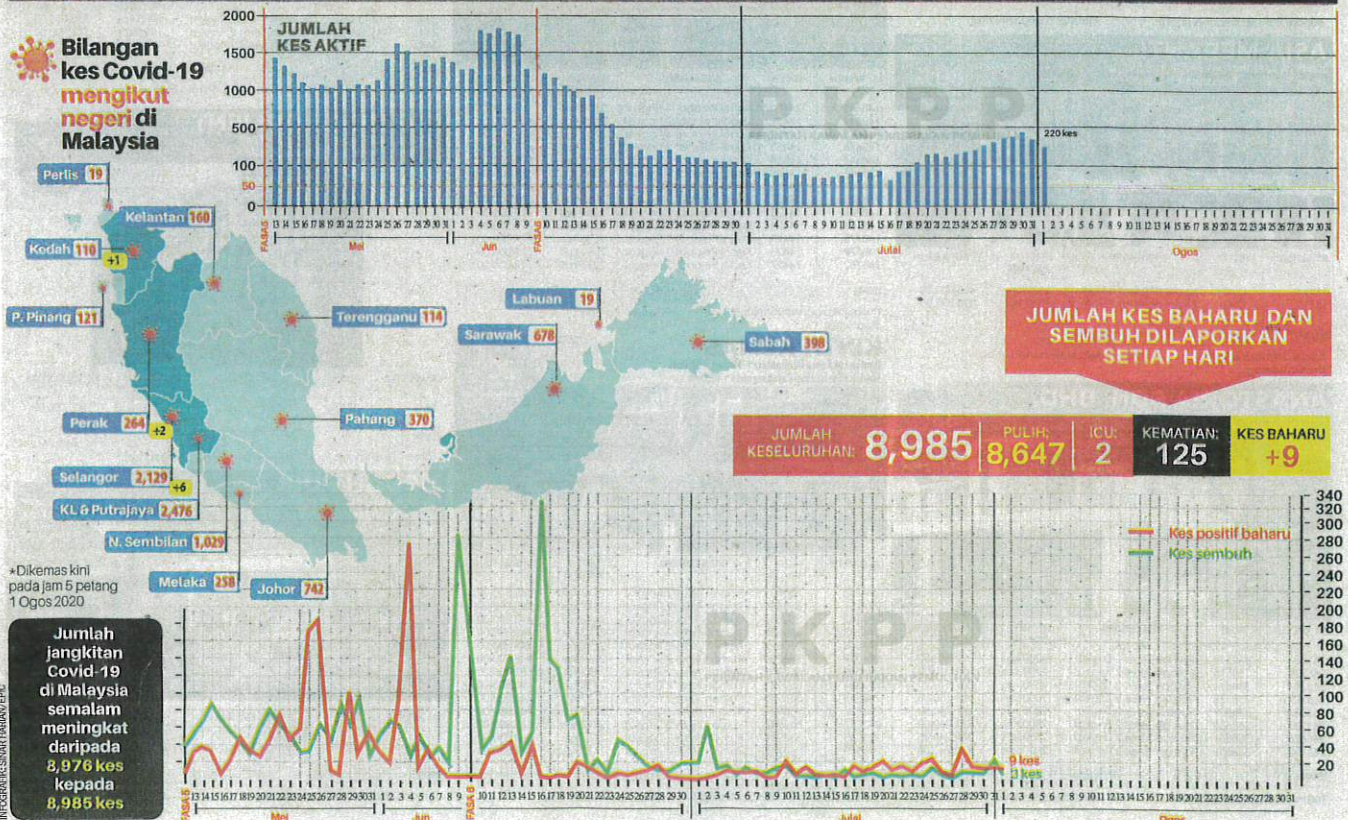
"Pelitup muka perubatan seperti pelitup tiga lapisan digunakan petugas kesihatan; orang awam yang mempunyai gejala saluran pernafasan, golongan berisiko tinggi seperti warga emas (jaitu mereka berusia 60 tahun dan ke atas) dan mereka yang mempunyai penyakit kronik seperti kencing manis dan darah tinggi.

"Penggunaan pelitup muka bukan perubatan disyorkan untuk mereka yang tidak mengalami gejala, namun berada di tempat di mana penjarakkan fizikal sukar diamalkan," menurutnya dalam kenyataan semalam.

Pelitup muka bukan perubatan jenis fabrik dijual di pasaran mungkin tidak menepati ciri-ciri disarankan Pertubuhan Kesihatan Dunia (WHO), namun boleh dipakai orang awam tetapi keberkesanannya mungkin berbeza bergantung kepada jenis dan bilangan lapisan kain digunakan.

"Pelitup muka tidak boleh dipakai kanak-kanak berumur kurang daripada dua tahun, bagi mereka yang sukar bernafas dan individu yang tidak sedarkan diri, kurang berupaya atau tidak dapat menanggalkan pelitup muka tanpa bantuan," katanya. - Bernama

SITUASI TERKINI KES COVID-19 DI MALAYSIA SETAKAT SEMALAM



AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 15-17

RUANGAN : NATION/NEWS



The director-general of Health credits the PM (right) for listening and making tough calls during the pandemic.



The reluctant hero

Malaysia's director-general of Health talks candidly to **Elena Koshy** about his journey to becoming the nation's most-watched face on screen

FOR Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, the very idea that people have the innate curiosity to learn about the person behind the remarkable persona, whose familiar face is streamed into the homes of ordinary Malaysians day after day, seems incomprehensible.

For most evenings, in the past few months, anxious Malaysians have been tuning in from all over the nation to watch the live telecast of the Covid-19 briefing, delivered by Dr Noor Hisham, who calmly details the latest developments in Malaysia's fight to contain the coronavirus.

In doing so, switching effortlessly between English and Bahasa, Dr Noor Hisham has become the country's public face in this fight: a reassuring voice in the midst of our collective panic; an anchor in the gathering storm.

In the next few months, he would prove to be one of the most effective public health officials in the world, with lessons for nations struggling to emerge from lockdowns.

For the mild-mannered doctor, the accolades and adoration that poured in from Malaysians and the world at large befuddles him. Ensnared within the officious bastion of Putrajaya, the federal administrative capital of Malaysia, Dr Noor Hisham sits across me looking slightly perturbed when I mention the BrandLaureate Awards: the "Certificate of Recognition and Appreciation" and the "Outstanding Brand Leadership Award 2020" which he received on July 17.

Waving his hands dismissively, he replies simply: "The award isn't for me; it's an

acknowledgement to the collective team effort."

He's also been cited as one of the three leading doctors in the fight to curb the spread of the Covid-19 virus worldwide, along with the US government's infectious disease expert, Dr Anthony Fauci and New Zealand's director-general of Health, Ashley Bloomfield.

"I don't know how they picked me, actually," he remarks, looking bewildered. "Suddenly I heard my name mentioned."

Pausing a moment, he goes on to add: "I didn't make the decisions. The accolade should go to the Prime Minister, not me."

Leaning forward, he asks pointedly: "Should you recognise me or the PM? He made the right decisions!"

But you gave the right advice, I argue. It seems slightly surreal to me that I'm seated here sparring with the director-general of Health on why he deserves the badge of honour as one of the nation's most beloved personalities in recent times.

His role, he insists, was only to advise. "I'm not the prime minister," he maintains. "I simply advise the prime minister and the government of the day. So here, the PM listens to me and the Ministry of Health."

That sort of self-deprecation is a minor motif in the doctor's otherwise animated conversation.

"I've always acknowledged that he listens and he trusts us. If he didn't trust us, he wouldn't have implemented, right or not?"

The question is of course, rhetorical. He shrugs his shoulders and smiles slightly.

TURN TO PAGE 16

AKHBAR : THE SUN

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NEWS WITHOUT BORDERS

Purpose of existence

FROM PAGE 15

COVID CONNECTION

He doesn't seem to enjoy small talk and cannot do it, though he will discuss his work for hours. His offhand, low-key manner makes him seem less self-aware than he actually is.

"What do you want to know?" he had asked pointedly when he entered the room minutes earlier. He glances briefly at his wristwatch and looks at me intently.

"I don't have much time," he murmurs. His usual daily media conference is scheduled in less than an hour. Impeccably dressed in a suit and tie, the 57-year-old doctor sits down reluctantly opposite me with a pained expression on his face. For the extremely private man, one-to-one interviews aren't really his cup of tea.

It's one thing to step into the role that seems tailor-made for him — that of a physician who's in charge of averting a natural disaster. His reassuring stance in public and reliance on verified data and credible sources to make informed decisions have earned him widespread admiration for demonstrating that effective disease containment is possible.

People like Dr Noor Hisham, who, up until now have been pretty much backstage players, have been thrust into the spotlight due to the void created in today's mistrustful world.

Still, it's quite another thing to sit down

and be subjected to an interview. Something he had managed to evade until today.

No one, perhaps, is better suited to being a doctor and less suited to being a "celebrity" of sorts.

It's not a title that he's comfortable with. "I'm just an adviser!" he protests vehemently.

He is nevertheless grateful for the trust bestowed but reveals that wasn't always the case at the beginning. People were initially doubtful that a Malaysian would be able to handle this storm.

It's the colonial mindset, he quips, that causes people to believe that only a Mat Salleh would be able to lead the country out of this pandemic.

"Netizens were asking: 'Is this the guy that was going to save us?'. They texted me and I apologised for disappointing them!" he recalls wryly.

It wasn't long before the doctor earned the trust of the *rakyat*; and he eventually led what has been hailed as one of the most successful responses to Covid-19 in the world.

"This was a new virus," he explains, and with rare candour, he goes on to elaborate: "With a new virus... you don't really understand its behaviour. It's just like when you embark on a new relationship with someone. You wouldn't know that person for such a short period of time!"

You can't stop him from talking at length about the coronavirus. After all, it's been the mainstay in his life for quite a while. As he runs through the chronology of the pandemic that hit the shores of our country, it's evident that the remarkable success that Malaysia has seen so far is a mixed bag of relief and frustration for him.

The fight, he points out, is far from over. "We're still fighting a war," reminds Dr Noor Hisham. "Now our problem is when the numbers go down, people let down their guard. You see, when we succeed, it breeds complacency and that in turn can breed failure. It's a vicious circle. We want to do prevention; now the onus is on the public to comply."

SERVING THE NATION

His work in containing the virus is far from over.

"I really don't have much of a life these days," he confesses candidly, adding that he takes his role to heart. He has always been imbued with a driving sense of duty.

"It's a privilege to serve," he remarks. "You can have the opportunity to serve and lead and more importantly,



His first love remains surgery.



A meeting with the Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah recently.

the whole government listens to you to do things right."

Dr Noor Hisham has been the director-general of Health since 2013, but during this epochal natural disaster, as a leading member of the federal government's coronavirus task force, he reluctantly stepped into the limelight and unwittingly became a veritable folk hero.

"In doing our jobs as best we can, most of the time you don't normally see us, because there aren't many major outbreaks," he explains, adding: "We are doing things like policy-making and serving from behind-the-scenes."

Being a surgeon, he can treat one patient at a time, he points out. But being an administrator and making the right policy, he can avert a national disaster.

"Now is the time to serve the country," he says simply.

He also admits the pressure can be punishing. "I've lost 8 kilos!" he exclaims with a wry smile, before adding dismissively: "But the fasting month also contributed to that."

The affable doctor who has a Masters in Surgery and Medical doctorate degree from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, joined the

civil service as a medical officer way back in August 1988.

He specialised in endocrine surgery and trained in various universities in Adelaide and Sydney, Australia. His work has been published in many local and international journals and he has also written chapters on endocrine surgery in textbooks.

But he readily admits that medicine wasn't his first choice. "I wanted to be a religious officer or a *multia*!" he reveals to my surprise.

Seriously? I blurt. "Yes, seriously!" he replies, smiling.

A search for his identity and the meaning of life back when he was 14 led him to religion.

"When I was in Form 2, I started thinking about the purpose of my existence. I focussed on religious studies to get to know myself on a deeper level and find answers to those existential questions," he recalls.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

The existential crisis could be attributed to his tumultuous childhood. "You were born in Sungai Pelek," I read from my careful research of him.



AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 15-17

RUANGAN : NATION/NEWS



Dr Noor Hisham (far left) as a student at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).



Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah calmly details the latest developments in Malaysia's fight to contain the coronavirus.

"That's what they say," he replies with a shrug. Where was he born, then? "I don't know," is his short reply.

"I was adopted by a Chinese Muslim family in Sungai Pelek. I only found out that I was adopted when I was 46," he explains.

He was halfway around the world when he found out the truth. "It's not a secret, really. Among our surgeons, they know the story lah," he says dispassionately.

He had attended the World Congress of Surgery in Montreal where he was introduced to someone by his surgeon friend. "I remembered that one of my uncles had migrated to Australia. I have family pictures, I knew the names but I had lost touch with them for more than 30 years," he recounts.

The man shared the same original surname 'Yew' and, after talking to him at length, Dr Noor Hisham deduced that this stranger was his cousin.

The man however, did not know of him at all. "We called his parents and they spoke to me. Eventually they flew down to Putrajaya to see me. It was then that they broke the news that I was adopted when I was just a few months old," he says with remarkable candour. Ever the pragmatist, he points out that he wouldn't be where he is today if he didn't go through those experiences.

"My adopted parents were separated and I was raised by a single mother. We had to stand on our own. I learnt to be resourceful and independent from young," he tells me.

Forced by poverty, he was eventually put in the care of the principal at Kolej Islam Klang where he continued his upper secondary studies.

"I took an avid interest in religious studies but the head of the religious studies called me up and told me to read medicine instead. He said that there were enough people studying religion but not enough studying

medicine!"

He acquiesced and did as he was told. "I wanted to help people at the end of the day and I realised that medicine was a way to do just that," he shares quietly.

He found very few obstacles in the pursuit of being a doctor. "When you come from nothing, you'd think it's difficult to read medicine. But the path is open. If you have good results you can do anything. It's all up to you."

JOURNEY ONWARDS

You had two adopted families then, I comment.

"I have many families who 'adopted' me," he answers with a smile. "Malay, Indian, Chinese — they all cared for me. I mixed around freely and have friends of different races and from all walks of life. I love the elderly and I find that I learn a lot from them." Half a beat later, he quips with a laugh: "In that way, I have very good PR!"

With a cheeky grin, he says in Tamil: "Naan kunjum kunjum pesuven (I speak a little)"

Chuckling, he relates that when he was a houseman at University Hospital, most of the Indian patients would insist on seeing him because he could carry a conversation in Tamil.

A huge part of his support comes from his own family. The father-of-six tells me that his children sometimes contribute to his speeches and puts in the additional *pantun* or two.

"They help make my speeches livelier," he shares, chuckling before adding softly: "My only wish is that they lead meaningful lives and contribute back to the nation. I'm very proud of them."

He maintains that surgery has remained a passion of his to this day. While other civil servants would clock off after a day's work

and head to the golf course for a round or two, he would return to his operating theatre (OT).

"I enjoy being back in my 'natural' environment where I can teach the junior doctors how to operate a bit and breathe in the OT air," he says half-wistfully.

"You asking me what I like to do when I'm not here?" he waves his hand around the meeting room. "Operations. Of course! I'd do it for free. Some people do it for money. I don't. If there's an interesting case, I'll do it!" he exclaims, smiling.

The lanky doctor was an avid sportsman (he was a school runner and played football during university days) and enjoys scuba diving and underwater photography.

"I don't do it anymore," he says regretfully. "I don't have the time!"

The time, he tells me, has been channelled towards handling the pandemic. His commitment in serving the nation remains steadfast and he is laser-focused now on managing the virus to avoid any backsliding after the lifting of restrictions.

"Back in Kolej Islam, we have this tagline: *Fastaqim Karna Umirta*," he says. "In a nutshell, you have to persevere in what you've been instructed to do. Perseverance is importance," he notes sagely.

It's something he's learnt over the years and during his training as a surgeon. "We used to joke during our training in HUKL about how hard we had to work," he recalls. "You have to stand operating from 7am to 8pm. You end at 8 and you still cannot go back. You still have to take care of the patient. You only clock out at 10 or 11pm at night." It's this kind of backbreaking work that built his work ethics which he practices to this day.

"The first intention is to serve. Serve the people, help the people. It's not about us. It's about how we serve. For the people from the people," he says simply.

He recommends a book for me to read. "It's called *Servant Leadership* by Robert K. Greenleaf. This explains my philosophy perfectly," he says, smiling.

"An important aspect of a surgeon's life is an up-to-date logbook," he adds mildly, almost as an afterthought. "For me, my social media platforms are logbooks of milestones of sorts."

Dr Noor Hisham meticulously maintains his social media platforms by himself. He reads every comment and takes note of every issue that's brought to his attention.

"He brings the feedback to meetings and does his own postings to educate, teach and record the successes and issues that his team faces. There are much more that's being done behind the scenes but Datuk



The doctor has been voted 'the most trusted face' by Malaysians nationwide.

DG (as he's known to his team) puts up pertinent issues regularly," I'm told later by one of his team members. "No one manages his sites?" I ask incredulously. "No. Datuk DG takes his role very personally and very seriously," he replies.

We all share him; as this person who talks to us every day. The interesting thing is he is delivering, for the most part, not so great news: the number of active cases in Malaysia, the growing clusters, the number of deaths and the numbers of those who recovered. But somehow, the way he does it and the level of empathy he shows make him seem like he's the right person for us at this time.

Already dubbed the "People's DG", Dr Noor Hisham's pledge of togetherness for a healthier Malaysia has generated much goodwill and excitement. He has fired up the hopes and imagination of people both nationwide and worldwide.

Right now, time is ticking. He glances at his watch again. "I have to go soon," he announces soberly. The self-effacing doctor rises to his feet and walks briskly out of the door to his press conference. He has to do what he's been tasked to do.

It's almost 5pm and time once again to step up to the podium and reassure Malaysians nationwide that the country's fight against the pandemic is ongoing and that the health of the nation is safe within the doctor's fine hands.



The Health Ministry won the Certificate of Recognition and Appreciation as well as Outstanding BrandLeadership Award 2020.

AKHBAR : THE SUN

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NEWS WITHOUT BORDERS

A win-win solution for banks and debtors

THE targeted extension of the moratorium on bank loan repayments for those who have lost jobs or had their pay cut as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic was welcome news indeed earlier this week.

In his announcement on Wednesday, Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin touched on the banks' commitment in the form of several measures to assist borrowers – regardless of whether they are individuals or small and medium enterprises – that are expected to benefit up to three million people and businesses.

The move is certainly reassuring and will help individuals and companies to get back on their feet again in the coming months.

The targeted moratorium will start once the earlier six-month automatic payment deferment, which was introduced in April, expires in September.

This measure is a win-win solution for banks and debtors: it helps banks eliminate possible bad debts and have a little longer to recover their loans, and it helps people by softening the impact of lost jobs and pay cuts.

Those who are without an income will

appreciate the three-month deferment that will give them time to look for the next best thing to do.

For businesses, the extension will help to secure them financially, giving them some lead time to stand on firmer ground before they begin repaying their dues to the banks.

For the banks, offering the extension at least gives them a better chance to recover their loans, which run into millions of ringgit. It might take slightly longer but it's still much better than getting nothing back at all if people become bankrupt or businesses go bust.

The government is obviously trying hard to get the economy going again and every Malaysian should work together with it to avoid a second wave of infections that would require a shutdown of economic activities again.

We cannot be lax in maintaining physical distancing and wearing face masks in public to protect ourselves and others from being infected with Covid-19.

This is the only way to stay ahead of the pandemic curve and drive the economy back. Stay safe, Malaysia.

'134 arrested for breaching MCO'

Ismail Sabri: Most offenders breached physical distancing rule

By ZAKIAH KOYA
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PETALING JAYA: Police arrested 134 individuals for breaching the movement control order (MCO), says Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

The Senior Minister said 2,294 mosques nationwide were observed by the police during Hari Raya Haji celebrations yesterday to ensure there was no breach of the standard operating procedure (SOP) during prayers.

"Of the 134 arrested, 19 were remanded while 22 others were given bail.

"Ninety-three others were fined. Among the offences were massage parlour activities without a licence, activities which did not follow the SOP, activities involving crowds which made physical distancing difficult and one count of breach of the home surveillance order," Ismail Sabri said in a statement yesterday.

He said 88 people who committed offences were those in the category of activities involv-

ing crowds which made physical distancing difficult.

"All the mosques were found to have followed the SOP," Ismail Sabri said, adding that on July 31, the police made 2,271 inspections on individuals undergoing home quarantine.

"The police and Health Ministry officials will continue their inspections and observations on these individuals to ensure they follow the SOP.

"Between July 27 and 31, the police acted against six individuals who failed to observe the SOP of home quarantine," the Senior Minister said.

Of the 3,384 individuals who returned from foreign countries, Ismail Sabri said, 13 were hospitalised between July 24 and 31 for further treatment.

Ismail Sabri also said that enforcement agencies involving the police, army, Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency as well as the Malaysia Border Security Agency would continue to tighten security at the borders to prevent illegal movements.



Safety measure: People queuing to have their temperatures checked before entering Pasar Sg Chua, Kajang.

Nine new cases recorded, including seven imported ones

PETALING JAYA: A total of nine cases have been detected but with no Covid-19 deaths as of Aug 1, says Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah.

Seven of the new cases were imported, involving five Malaysians returning from overseas.

He revealed that authorities had detected a case in Selangor which originated from the Bukit Tiram cluster in Johor.

The other local transmission is a Malaysian from the Sivaganga cluster in Kedah.

"There are three more recoveries and the total number of recovered cases now stand at 8,647, which is a recovery rate of 96.2%.

"As at noon Aug 1, there are two cases in the intensive care unit, with one needing ventilator.

"There has been no increase in fatalities with the total deaths in Malaysia remaining at 125 cases," Dr Noor Hisham said in his daily update on the Covid-19 pandemic yesterday.

He also said that 135 individuals in the Bukit Tiram cluster had been screened.

"Ten have tested positive for Covid-19, 124 were negative and one is still awaiting results.

"Of the 10 positive, four are foreigners," he said.

He reminded the public that the enforcement of mandatory face masks on public

transport and in crowded areas had started.

Individuals not wearing face masks in crowded public places will face a RM1,000 fine under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act.

Dr Noor Hisham said constant hand washing or hand sanitising along with physical distancing of at least one metre from others must also be followed.

"There are two types of face masks that can be used for prevention – medical and non-medical.

"The three-ply surgical mask is to be used by health personnel, those who have symptoms of respiratory illnesses, high-risk groups

(those aged 60 and above) and by those who suffer from chronic illnesses such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

"The non-medical face mask is recommended for those who do not have any symptoms but are in crowded places where physical distancing may be difficult," he said.

He cautioned that not all fabric face masks sold in the market were effective and the public must not share the same face mask.

Watch the video
thestartv.com

