



Sharing his views: Muhyiddin speaking during a press conference via live video broadcast at his residence. — Bernama

PM: Steps taken to avoid another MCO

If situation worsens, we will find a way to deal with it, says Muhyiddin

PETALING JAYA: Every measure possible is being taken to avoid implementing another round of strict movement control order (MCO) to avoid additional burden on the people and economy, says Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

"We have already seen the effects of the lockdown and I cannot predict what would happen if another one were to be implemented.

"We have spent about RM300bil to help the people.

"If there were to be another MCO, maybe we would need a larger amount," said the Prime Minister.

However, he said he was not about to tighten the purse strings when the people's health was at stake.

He added that he had approved every request from the Health Ministry to manage the situation, amounting to about RM2bil.

And, if the situation was no longer manageable despite the government's best efforts, then they would find a way to deal with it, he said.

"Right now, let us go through this phase and take the appropriate measures."

Muhyiddin also stood by the decision to impose conditional MCO in Selangor and Sabah to further curb the spread of Covid-19.

Even though there were areas within the state that were categorised as yellow and green zones, Muhyiddin said the government decided on a pre-emptive and proactive move to ensure the number of cases did not rise.

"Before we decided to impose conditional MCO in Selangor, certain areas were already under targeted MCO.

"But because cases are rising all over the state, the National Security Council (MKN) opted to declare conditional MCO to stop more people from being infected," he said.

He said it was also a right move for schools to be closed to allay parents' fears.

"Even if they were open, parents would be afraid to send their children to school so it was decided for schools to be closed for two weeks and lessons to go online while we monitor the situation," he said.

Muhyiddin also said similar moves to control the Covid-19 situation in Sabah were disrupted when the state election was held in September following the dissolution of the state assembly in July.

The failure to observe standard operating

procedure (SOP) at the time led to an increase of cases in the state and created problems, he added.

However, he said the government was working hard to contain the situation there and "we are looking at it very thoroughly".

He said the government would be taking a multi-dimensional approach to the problem and MKN would be working closely with Sabah Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Seri Masidi Manjun to manage the situation in the state.

"There will be a rise in numbers, but after a while, it will plateau before going down in the next two to three weeks.

"Things are under control," he said.

Muhyiddin also said there were no double standards in punishing those who broke the SOP.

He explained that while he was perceived to have broken the rules for not wearing the pink band worn by those undergoing home quarantine, he said he was following advice from doctors who said he did not need it.

"When it comes to the rules, I am the most obedient and I did not wear the band because doctors felt I did not have to wear it.

"If I am needed to, I would have," he said, adding that he did not sit near Religious Affairs Minister Datuk Dr Zulkifli Mohamad Al-Bakri at the meeting. The latter tested positive for Covid-19.

He also said investigations on Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Datuk Mohd Khairuddin Aman Razali had been sent to the Attorney General.

Separately, Muhyiddin, the Perikatan Nasional chairman, said the coalition would assess the situation before fielding a candidate in the Batu Sapi by-election on Dec 5.

"We will look at the situation before we decide because there are seats allocated under Gabungan Rakyat Sabah (GRS).

"Even if Perikatan does not contest, maybe the others will make a decision," he said.

GRS, which is made up of Perikatan, Barisan Nasional and Parti Bersatu Sabah, won in the recent state election.

The Batu Sapi seat fell vacant following the death of its MP Datuk Liew Vui Keong on Oct 2 from a lung infection.

Barisan and Parti Cinta Sabah, led by former foreign minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman, have decided not to contest in the by-election.