

Covid-19: Lahad Datu declared red zone

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COVID-19 | The Health Ministry has declared Lahad Datu, Sabah, as a red zone following a surge in Covid-19 cases recorded yesterday.

The ministry today tweeted that Lahad Datu had recorded 43 new cases, as of yesterday, Sept 7.

"All the new cases were detected in the lock-up at Lahad Datu district police headquarters involving 21 locals and 22 foreigners.

Yesterday, the ministry announced that the country had recorded 62 new cases, where 56 were locally acquired while six were imported.

Of the local cases, 50 of them are part of the Benteng LD in Sabah, where an outbreak was detected at Tawau Prison and the Lahad Datu district police headquarters (IPD).

Health Ministry director-general Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah had cited the cramped facilities in the lock-ups as a contributor to the transmission.

“Based on risk analysis, the factor behind Covid-19 transmission in this cluster is the cramped and crowded lock-up facilities.

“It is found that physical distancing is hard to put in practice. This is the main contributor to the spread of Covid-19 among the prisoners.

“Thus, adherence to standard operating procedures is important and must be adhered to, regardless of venue,” Noor Hisham had said.

The cluster originated from two undocumented migrants who were held at the Lahad Datu district police headquarters on Aug 24, before being tested positive for Covid-19 on Aug 31.

Contact tracing efforts subsequently led to 1,404 people being tested over a week, of which 66 (4.7 percent) of them tested positive. Sixty-four of those cases involved prisoners, while the remainder involved a prison officer and his one-year-old nephew.

For the record, Sabah will hold its state election on Sept 26, following the

dissolution of the Legislative Assembly on July 30.

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