

PM quarantines at home, reveals swab test habit

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The Health Ministry has ordered Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin to undergo quarantine at home, where he will continue to perform his duties.

In a statement today, Muhyiddin said the Health Ministry issued the Home Surveillance Order (HSO) after confirming that Islamic Affairs Minister Zulkifli Mohamad Al-Bakri was Covid-19 positive.

Muhyiddin said he chaired a special National Security Council (NSC) meeting attended by Zulkifli on Oct 3. The HSO expires on Oct 16.

The prime minister assured that government affairs would not be affected due to his quarantine.

"I will use video conference for all the meetings I need to chair," he added.

Muhyiddin also revealed that he has been undergoing swab tests for Covid-19

every two weeks since April.

He underwent another three swab tests on Sept 22, 26, and 29 and the results were all negative.

The prime minister had traveled to Sabah to campaign for Gagasan Rakyat Sabah candidates in the Sept 26 state election, which was called following a failed political coup.

Since the election, Sabah has witnessed a surge in Covid-19 cases, which have now spread to the rest of Malaysia.

Meanwhile, Health Ministry director-general Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said all those identified as close contacts at the NSC meeting have been issued a 14-day HSO beginning Oct 3 and have been issued quarantine wristbands.

Others at the meeting who were not close contacts were still required to monitor their own health from their homes using the MySejahtera app's home assessment tool.

"They have been advised to seek treatment at a nearby healthcare facility if they experience symptoms during the observation period," he said.

Based on photos of the meeting that Muhyiddin posted on social media and in press reports, Finance Minister Tengku Zafrul Abdul Aziz was among those seated closest to Zulkifli.

Other cabinet members who attended the meeting included Health Minister Dr Adham Baba, Defence Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob, International Trade and Industry Minister Mohamed Azmin Ali, Works Minister Fadillah Yusof, and Education Minister Radzi Jidin.

Among top civil servants in attendance at the meeting included Noor Hisham, inspector-general of police (IGP) Abdul Hamid Bador, and defence force chief Affendi Buang.

Ismail Sabri and Noor Hisham were originally scheduled to hold separate press conferences on Malaysia's Covid-19 situation today, but both press conferences were abruptly cancelled with no reasons given.

Malaysiakini had contacted Noor Hisham to ask whether he is being tested for Covid-19 but has yet to receive a response.

Ismail Sabri said he has taken a Covid-19 test this afternoon but has yet to receive results.

Abdul Hamid told Malaysiakini he was classified as a "distant contact" by the Health Ministry because he sat far away from the Islamic affairs minister throughout the meeting.

The IGP was directed to undergo home quarantine and monitor his health using the MySejahtera app for 14 days.

He said he has undergone a Covid-19 test today and the result was negative.

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