

Noor Hisham: In Sabah, fearful locals flee medics, refuse to get admitted

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Medical frontliners are facing challenges to contain Covid-19 in Sabah after some villagers reportedly hid from authorities.

Health Ministry director-general Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said medical frontliners had to seek help from the police to get villagers to cooperate with them.

"The education in terms of understanding the disease and awareness is a bit lacking compared to West Malaysia.

"The second challenge is that when we want to admit them, or when they are asymptomatic but test positive, we have issues to force them to go to the hospital," he said.

He shared that sometimes, the villagers would try to run away when they see

medical workers. So the police and the army were being brought in to address this problem.

Meanwhile, he said the current R0 value (pronounced R naught) has improved.

The R-value is an indication of how many people a Covid-19 patient can infect, or in short, the infectivity rate.

For instance, he said if the R-value is four, it means a person who is positive with Covid-19 can infect four other people during their infectious period.

"Since the implementation of the conditional movement control order, there has been positive results.

"Because when we started the CMCO, the R0 was 2.2. In the last two days, it has been about 1.5. Today the R0 for the whole country has been reduced to 1.2.

"But for Sabah, the R0 is still about 1.3. Selangor's stands at 1.4.

"Kedah is doing very well at 0.7, including those in the prison cluster. So if we exclude the prison clusters, it would be lower.

"So whatever we have done for Kedah to contain the infection is what we are doing for Sabah. We are seeing some positive signs," he said.

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