

## **US ambassador impressed by M'sia efforts to combat Covid-19**

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United States Ambassador-designate to Malaysia Brian McFeeters said he is very impressed by Malaysia's response to Covid-19, which includes efforts to prevent the spread of the virus, patient treatment, and the vaccination programme.

"The whole world is challenged by this crisis, every country is doing its best. I think Malaysia, from what I understand, I'm not an expert, but Malaysia's is doing a wonderful job," he said.

He was speaking to reporters after witnessing the handing over of contribution from his government to the Covid-19 Integrated Quarantine and Treatment Centre (PKRC) 2.0 at the Malaysia Agro Exposition Park Serdang (Maeps) in Serdang, today.

The donation, consisting of Covid-19 test kits and personal protective equipment (PPE) totalling US\$75,000 (RM309,000), were provided by the US Department of Defence, United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) Overseas

Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) office.

"I hope this donation of PPE and quick test kits benefits the frontliners. I hope this donation is a recognition of our long-standing close relationship and joint effort to provide humanitarian assistance during the crisis," Mc Feeters said, in fluent Malay.

He said US companies in Malaysia have also been active, with over RM7 million contributed to Covid-19 relief efforts over the last year.

McFeeters said the US is committed to global Covid-19 relief efforts, and the country has pledged US\$4 billion (RM16.5 billion) through 2022 with half already given to Covax, making it the largest contributor to the Covax effort.

On the US-Malaysia relationship, he said apart from the Covid-19 pandemic, the embassy is focused on building stronger ties between the two countries in any way possible.

"The three main areas are the economic relationship, security relationship, and people-to-people ties such as exchange programmes, education, and learning about each other's systems that include maybe having (Malaysia's) members of Parliament visit the US Congress, and things like that.

"So we are working on these areas even now and especially after Covid-19," he said.

In terms of economic ties, McFeeters said both countries have very impressive and continuous relationships with about US\$60 billion (RM247.8 billion) in trade every year.

He said the US has also invested about US\$10 billion (RM41.3 billion) in Malaysia, which produced close to 100,000 jobs for Malaysians.

"So one of my priorities as ambassador is (to) try to build on both trade and investment," he added.

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