

PM, NSC urged to extend RMCO

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Ministry wants 'situation more under control' but Muhyiddin will decide

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KULAI: Both the National Security Council (NSC) and the Prime Minister have been advised to extend the curbs under the recovery movement control order (MCO) against the Covid-19 pandemic beyond Aug 31.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba said the ministry had advised the council and Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin to consider implementing the MCO until the "situation was more under control".

The NSC and the Prime Minister would decide whether to extend it, he added.

"The Health Ministry has proposed to the council and the Prime Minister to continue with the MCO until the situation is more under control.

"It depends on the Prime Minister, who will announce it (the decision) as the Aug 31 recovery MCO period is coming to an end," he said after launching Socso's Prihatin 10gara Selamat programme at the Dewan Felda Bukit Besar here yesterday.

He was responding to a question



on whether the government would extend the recovery MCO period as it was due to end in about a week.

The Star has highlighted views from medical experts and business groups calling for the recovery MCO to be extended, with many advising continuous vigilance despite the number of daily cases hovering around single low double digits.

Many experts have also argued that the emergence of clusters in the north, especially the Tawar cluster in Kedah with 65 cases, one of the biggest active clusters, was due to people letting their guard down after being in the "green zone" since late April.

Dr Adham pointed out that according to the World Health

Organisation, the Covid-19 pandemic would be around for at least two more years.

"We can see that other countries are still struggling with the increasing number of cases, including import cases.

"For our country, we still need to control our entry points and borders well," he said.

Social concern: Dr Adham Baba (third from left) launching the Socso Prihatin 10gara Selamat programme at Dewan Felda Bukit Besar in Kulai.

On the RM1,000 fine meted out against Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Datuk Dr Mohd Khairuddin Aman Razali for violating his quarantine, Dr Adham said he would leave this to the authorities to decide.

"The maximum fine is RM1,000. If there are any other charges, then it depends on the authorities involved at other levels," he said.

Mohd Khairuddin, who was fined for failing to adhere to regulations under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988, had said that he would be returning four months of his ministerial salary as an act of remorse.

On Aug 13, Nasi Kandar Salleh restaurant owner Nezar Mohamed Sabur Batcha, 57, was sentenced to five months' jail and fined RM12,000 by the Jitra Magistrate's Court after pleading guilty to violating home quarantine orders.

Nezar, an Indian national with permanent resident status, is said to be 'patient zero' linked to the Sivagangga cluster which has since been responsible for some 45 infections in Kedah, Perlis and Penang and caused closure of schools.