

PM: ABIDE BY S.O.P.

UNTIL VACCINE IS FOUND

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This is key to preventing the return of Covid-19 in the country, says Muhyiddin

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THE government will continue to ensure people comply with the Health Ministry's standard operating procedures (SOP) to prevent the spread of Covid-19 until a vaccine is found.

Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said Malaysians would have to continue to abide by the SOP set by the government until the Health Ministry announced that they did not have to do so any more.

"People will have to practise the SOP, such as wearing face masks and (adhering to) social distancing (rules) for as long as there is no vaccine (available) for Covid-19. There are efforts in the United States and China to create a vaccine but they have not found one."

This, he said, was key to preventing the return of Covid-19 in Malaysia.

Muhyiddin was speaking at a meet-the-people session at Dewan Serbaguna Bukit Gambir here yesterday. Present were Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Hasni Mohammad and Johor police chief Datuk Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay.

This marked the first time Muhyiddin, who is Gambir assemblyman, was visiting his constituency since the Movement

Control Order (MCO) was enforced on March 18 and after interstate travel restrictions were eased.

Muhyiddin, who is also Pagoh member of parliament, said he was proud of Malaysians for being disciplined and complying with the SOP and instructions issued by the government.

"Although some defied the order, the number is very small.

"What we did in enforcing the MCO is unprecedented in the country. I remember that when I took the oath of office on March 1, and on March 18, I had to announce the implementation of the MCO to control the spread of Covid-19.

"*Alhamdulillah* (Praise God), our efforts are recognised by the world as Malaysia is among the top five countries with the best Covid-19 management."

He expressed the government's gratitude to frontliners, including medical personnel, police, the armed forces, as well as other uniformed agencies.

Muhyiddin said it was time for the frontliners to "take a step back and rest" after working hard to contain the spread of Covid-19.

"Community leaders should take over the responsibility of reminding the people to adhere to the SOP to prevent the re-emergence of the virus."

He said the task of stimulating the economy following the months-long MCO period was as challenging as curbing the spread of Covid-19 itself.

He said although economic activities had largely resumed, they had yet to reach the targeted level, and there were still many problems, including those faced by businesses.

He said the government's move to reopen the economy was not

done in haste, but based on data and research from various parties.

Economic experts, he said, had also forecast that Malaysia's economy would contract in the second and third quarters of this year.

"Our economy lost RM2.4 billion a day during the MCO. During one National Economic Action Council meeting, Bank Negara governor (Datuk Nor Shamsiah Mohd Yunus) told us the worrying news that if the economy didn't reopen soon, the banking system would collapse and Malaysia would suffer a loss of RM1 trillion.

"That is why we took the bold decision to reopen the economy in stages so that it wouldn't collapse and people wouldn't lose jobs. About 95 per cent of the economy has reopened."

He expressed concern that about one million workers, especially young people, would lose their jobs due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"If we don't take urgent measures, it (unemployment) will lead to a huge problem for our citizens, our youth.

"(Therefore,) we urge state governments and the local authorities to assist individuals and businesses in facilitating their business operations."

Community leaders should take over the responsibility of reminding the people to adhere to the SOP to prevent the re-emergence of the virus.

PRIME MINISTER TAN SRI MUHYIDDIN YASSIN