

PM ON WORKING VISIT TO INDONESIA TODAY

Leaders to discuss efforts to address common challenges of Covid-19 pandemic

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TAN Sri Muhyiddin Yassin is making his first working visit to Indonesia since his appointment as prime minister.

The Foreign Ministry said the visit today, under strict standard operating procedures (SOP), was at the invitation of Indonesian President Joko Widodo. They would discuss efforts to address the common challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and several other important matters.

These include joint efforts to combat international discrimination against the Malaysian and Indonesian palm oil industries, cooperation in environmental protection and transboundary haze.

"(The meeting is) to increase joint efforts in the field of

trade and investment, including the potential involvement of Malaysian businesses to ensure the successful implementation of Indonesia's plan to relocate its capital from Jakarta to East Kalimantan. Malaysia's potential involvement in the project will contribute towards regional economic recovery efforts, particularly in the post-pandemic era," Wisma Putra said in a statement yesterday.

The meeting was also to intensify negotiations on the Reciprocal Green Lane (RGL) scheme for official and business travel between both countries, it said.

This negotiations are expected to deliberate on an SOP that can be agreed Upon by both countries.

"The RGL scheme will not be implemented immediately.

"The decision to implement the RGL depends on the Covid-19 sta-

tus in both countries at the time and also subject to the approval of the health authorities of both countries," it said.

The ministry said the meeting would also seek to acquire best practices in the use of Covid-19 vaccines, especially since Indonesia had begun its vaccination rollout programme on its citizens. This knowledge-sharing initiative, it said, would benefit Malaysia since the country would begin its vaccination programme soon.

The ministry said given the Covid-19 pandemic in both countries, Muhyiddin had instructed that the official visit be kept to less than 24 hours.

"This request had been conveyed to and was well received by the Indonesian government.

"To fulfil the logistical requirements of the prime minister's official visit, Joko had personally instructed that the official venue of the visit be at Istana Merdeka

in Jakarta instead of Istana Bogor in Bogor, West Java.

"Programmes for the official visit have also been shortened. Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, accompanied by a small delegation of senior officials from his ministry, will hold discussions with Indonesian Foreign Minister

Retno Marsudi before the start of Muhyiddin's official visit."

Muhyiddin's visit would kick off with a meeting with Joko tomorrow morning, after which both leaders would perform Friday prayers at Baiturrahim Mosque in the Istana Merdeka complex before proceeding to the official luncheon hosted by the president. After the luncheon, Muhyiddin and the Malaysian delegation would return to Malaysia and undergo mandatory quarantine as prescribed by the Health Ministry.

To minimise Covid-19 risks, the prime minister would be accompanied by a delegation comprising Hishammuddin and a small number of senior government officials.

The ministry also said the visit would be subjected to strict Covid-19 preventive SOP as agreed upon by the Health Min-

istry, the National Security Council and the Indonesian Health Ministry.

The Malaysian delegation was required to take a swab test before departing to Indonesia and only individuals with negative test results within 48 hours were allowed to be part of the official visit.

The ministry said the delegation would fly in a special aircraft instead of by commercial arrangements to create a travel bubble to Indonesia.

"The Malaysian delegation is required to take another swab test upon arrival at the airport in Jakarta.

"Only individuals with negative test results, which are verified by the Indonesian authorities, will be taken directly to their accommodation.

"The Malaysian delegation is prohibited from moving anywhere on their own except to designated areas of the official visit,

and remain confined to their accommodation and designated areas of the official visit."

The group would also be required to wear face masks at all times, and physical contact would be prohibited.

The ministry

said the Indonesian government had given its assurance that the official visit would be held under very strict Covid-19 SOP.

"In the spirit of close friendship and decades of established bilateral relations, Malaysia is pleased to accept Indonesia's invitation. Indonesia has always been the first destination for an official visit by the Malaysian prime minister after assuming office, which is also the established norm that is practised by the president of Indonesia.

"There are several matters involving the interests of both countries that require further discussion and mutual understanding, including important issues such as economic cooperation, regional and bilateral security, as well as joint efforts in combating the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, leaders of both countries have agreed to have a face-to-face meeting."



Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin



Joko Widodo