

PM TO REVEAL CONTAINMENT PLANS SOON

Teachers, lecturers returning to Sabah, Sarawak must take Covid-19 tests, says Ismail Sabri

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PRIME Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin will make the much-awaited announcement on the possibility of reintroducing measures similar to the Movement Control Order (MCO) this Monday.

Announcing this yesterday, Senior Minister (Security Cluster) Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said the National Security Council (NSC) was formulating the necessary Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) based on suggestions from various parties.

"We have the plans, but we are looking into some details before taking any action. On Monday, I still have a special technical meeting to deliberate on the finer details.

"I cannot disclose more than that. The prime minister will make an announcement on Monday," he said.

He said the government via the Special NSC meeting was reviewing and evaluating the immediate measures to be taken to contain the spread of Covid-19.

He said among the items that would be deliberated included the introduction of stricter SOP to prevent unnecessary travel among the public.

"An announcement will be made by the prime minister on plans that will be implemented in the near future.

"The government constantly monitors the Covid-19 situation in the country and is discussing the best way to contain the spread of the virus.

"Prevention of the virus starts from us, such as by wearing masks, ensuring good hygiene by using sanitiser and adhering to physical distancing," he said during an online press conference yesterday.

On Wednesday, Malaysia hit the 3,000 figure mark in its new Covid-19 tally with more than 25,000 active cases.

Ismail Sabri said teachers and lecturers returning to Sabah and Sarawak from the peninsula and Labuan to resume their duties



Health workers conducting Covid-19 tests on motorists at the Indera Mahkota Health Clinic in Kuantan last month. The National Security Council is formulating the necessary Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) based on suggestions from various parties. PIC BY FARIZUL HAFIZ AWANG

would be required to take Covid-19 swab tests.

He said the Health Ministry would bear the cost.

"Those returning to Sabah will have to take swab test three days before their departure, while those returning to Sarawak will have to take swab test either before their journey or upon their arrival at the airport in Sarawak.

"Returnees to Sabah are not required to undergo mandatory quarantine.

"However, returnees to Sarawak are required to undergo mandatory quarantine at Teacher Education Institutes (IPG) or any other place deemed suitable by the state government.

"The cost for the quarantine will be borne by the Sarawak government," he said.

Earlier on Dec 31, Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin announced that all educational institutions registered with the Education Ministry would reopen on Jan 20.

Ismail Sabri said police arrested 277 individuals on Wednesday

for violating the SOP under the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO), where 276 individuals were issued with compounds while one was remanded.

The arrests were made during 47,770 inspections conducted nationwide.

"Among the offences include failure to provide materials to record visitors' details (102), not wearing face masks (67), activities at entertainment outlets (64), failure to practise physical distancing (43) and others (1).

"A total of 3,447 supermarkets, 4,715 restaurants, 1,310 factories, 1,135 markets, 3,300 places of worship, 1,277 recreational places were inspected," he said during a Facebook live session yesterday.

Under the ongoing Ops Benteng, Ismail Sabri said 26 illegal immigrants were nabbed and nine land vehicles seized.

A total of 113 roadblocks were also mounted nationwide.

He said the government would erect a floating barge to bolster border security at Pulau Ketam, Selangor, due to the significant

increase in the number of illegal immigrants arrested there between 2019 and last year.

"In 2019, the authorities nabbed 328 illegal entrants in Pulau Ketam and made 21 seizures worth of RM2,344,573.

"However, this increased to some 2,002 illegal immigrants arrested last year. A total of 207 seizures worth of RM11,736,918.87 were made in 2020," he said.

As for sanitisation operations, Ismail Sabri said 52 operations were carried out on Wednesday involving Melaka (14), Selangor (six), Johor (six), Sabah (five), Terengganu (three), Penang (three), Kelantan (three), Kuala Lumpur (three), Kedah (two) and one each in Sarawak, Negri Sembilan, Pahang, Perak, Perlis, Labuan and Putrajaya.

On mandatory quarantine measures, he said 839 individuals returned from overseas yesterday, raising the total number of returnees to 100,319 individuals between July 24 and Jan 7. The returnees arrived from 36 countries.