

PM: RM70B TO COMBAT VIRUS

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Muhyiddin says PN govt trying to correct years of underinvestment in healthcare

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THE Perikatan Nasional government is trying to correct years of underinvestment in the public healthcare system, which is causing the country to suffer today, said Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said the government had allocated more than RM70 billion to the Health Ministry, almost five per cent of Malaysia's gross domestic product, to manage the pandemic and improve the public healthcare system capacity.

"This is the highest (amount) ever in Malaysia's history, because of the crisis.

"We have suffered from years of underinvestment in the public health system and the government is trying to correct it now.

"I'm not trying to blame the previous administration, but this is the fact, because we did not give more attention to healthcare and hospital facilities," he said in a special media interview yesterday.

He said Covid-19 was a huge crisis and nobody had expected it.

"This is a reality that we cannot deny.

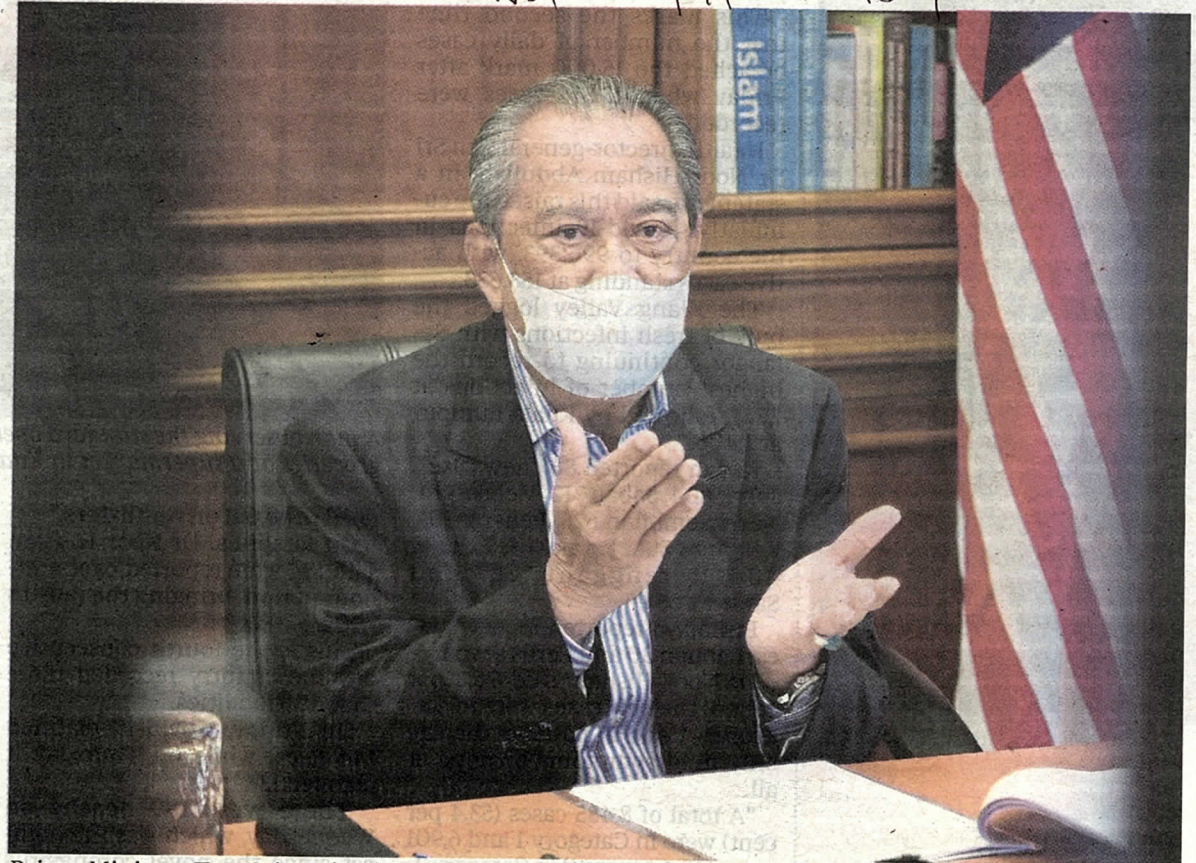
"You may have nice hospitals, but you don't have enough beds, not enough intensive care unit equipment, not enough ventilators or oxygen tanks because this has never happened before."

Muhyiddin, who acknowledged that the number of cases in the Klang Valley was extremely high, also said this was why the Greater Klang Valley Task Force was created to handle the huge number of infections.

He said Health deputy director-general Datuk Dr Chong Chee Kheong regularly updated him on measures being taken, and ensured that there were enough beds to treat Covid-19 patients in the Klang Valley.

The government, he added, had decided to decant non-Covid-19 patients to private healthcare facilities to decrease the burden on public hospitals.

"We also decided to classify government hospitals as Covid-19 hospitals and mobilise manpower from outside the Klang Valley, where cases have gone



Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin speaking during a special media interview at his office in Putrajaya yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

down. Through Operation Surge Capacity, all in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor who are eligible for the vaccine will receive at least their first dose by Aug 1.

"We have also approved an ad-

ditional three million doses for Selangor.

"With the increased capacity and increased percentage (of those vaccinated), the situation in the Klang Valley will improve,

insyaAllah."

In the interview, Muhyiddin expressed gratitude to healthcare frontliners and apologised to those who had been affected by the pandemic.