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PM: Cabinet to discuss appeal by contract doctors

KLANG: Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin will discuss with the Cabinet on the appeal by contract doctors to be appointed to permanent positions in the civil service.

He said the matter had to be discussed thoroughly as it would involve a cost of more than RM2bil to the government.

"There are appeals from contract doctors, so the proposal paper by the Health Ministry will be brought to the Cabinet.

"To fulfil the demand will involve a high cost of more than RM2bil and in the current situation, there are a few limitations.

"So, we will see how we can overcome the situation," he told reporters after visiting Hospital Tengku Ampuan Rahimah here yesterday.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba had been reported by the media as advising the contract doctors to be patient as the matter would be discussed by the Cabinet.

The issue had gained momentum recently when a social media campaign known as #HartalDoktorKontrak kicked off, with calls for contract doctors to go on strike on July 26 if the government fails to resolve their problem.

A separate campaign called Code Black, organised by the Section for House Officers, Medical Officers and Specialists (Schomos), started last Thursday and ended on Monday.

The campaign encourages doctors

to wear black to show solidarity.

The Health Ministry had said that between December 2016 and May 31 this year, a total of 23,077 doctors were appointed on a contract basis to undergo graduate training and compulsory service.

Of the number, only 789 (3.47%) out of 2,544 officers from the 2016 and 2017 batch had been offered permanent appointments by the government.

In response, Dr Adham said this was due to constraints in perma-

nent positions and recruitment was allowed without relying on the limited permanent vacancies.

The Malaysian Medical Association had also met with the Health Ministry last week where the group had clearly stated the need for clear criteria and requirements for contract staff to be given permanent positions as well as a system for all contract staff to be able to go on to the postgraduate pathway to specialisation. — Bernama