

# Muhyiddin government's 7 achievements ensuring nation's health

ANY fair-minded person would acknowledge that for a whole year, Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has managed the affairs of the nation relatively well.

His stewardship is all the more remarkable when we consider that for most of the time that he has been prime minister since March 1, 2020, there is a sword of Damocles dangling over his head — a sword in the hands of four or five power-hungry politicians hell-bent on ousting him.

In spite of this, with the help of his cabinet, the Health Ministry and the nation as a whole, Muhyiddin has ensured that the Covid-19 pandemic is controlled, while lives are protected and livelihoods safeguarded. Balancing lives and livelihoods is a Herculean task facing most governments.

Malaysia is certainly within the top bracket of nations in the handling of the pandemic. Its mass immunisation programme, which began on Feb 24 with the vaccination of frontliners, is the epitome of the present phase in the



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fight against the invisible virus.

Protecting lives and livelihoods is intimately linked to generating economic activities, which is the nation's twin challenge. As with the pandemic, the prime minister has been totally focused upon creating jobs, ensuring that economic aid packages reach their targets and that the vulnerable in particular have food on their table.

There have been five stimulus programmes so far, buttressed by the biggest budget in the nation's history, valued at RM322.50 billion for 2021. Malaysia was also one of the first countries to implement a moratorium on the re-

payment of bank loans.

As part of a comprehensive plan to revitalise the economy, the Muhyiddin government has emphasised digital transformation. It is estimated that when fully digitalised, the economy could create 500,000 jobs and would contribute 22.6 per cent to the nation's gross domestic product by 2025. Training and skills acquisition would be directed towards this end.

Yet another achievement of the government in the last one year has been its drive to curb and eliminate corruption in enforcement agencies. It explains why a number of personnel in departments, such as Immigration, Customs and the police, have been hauled up recently. Muhyiddin has pledged to implement the National Anti-Corruption Plan formulated by the previous Pakatan Harapan government.

Equally significant is the prime minister's pledge to uphold and respect the independence of the judiciary, which is fundamental to the integrity of the entire sys-

tem of governance. This is not just a verbal commitment.

There are several high-profile corruption cases before the Malaysian courts and since they involve some major political figures from Umno, whose members of parliament provide critical support to Muhyiddin, his principled refusal to "interfere" in the judicial process to "save" these individuals is a courageous move rare in the annals of Malaysian politics.

Muhyiddin is also the first prime minister to launch a National Unity Blueprint (2021-2030). Because it contains strategies linked to aspirations, the Blueprint conveys the impression that it is a serious endeavour. Of course, a lot depends on the implementation of the blueprint.

Another long-term plan that became a reality this year during Muhyiddin's tenure was the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). It is anticipated that RCEP will not only boost intra-Asean trade, but also accelerate the region's economic devel-

opment through the synergy derived from Asean's interaction with RCEP's more advanced economies, such as Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan and China. Some have even argued that RCEP, as a regional grouping, could change the dynamics of power in the global economy.

The seven achievements noted here underscore the significance of Muhyiddin's first year as prime minister. It is not only in his approach to the unprecedented health and economic crises that he has proved his mettle.

By initiating changes in other areas which are of tremendous long-term importance such as the challenge of national unity he has shown that he is a visionary leader in his own right. May he continue to lead the nation with that deep sense of responsibility that emanates from his abiding faith in God.

The writer is a political scientist and has been writing on Malaysian issues for the last five decades