

Doing what's best for M'sia

PM reflects on pandemic challenge during first year in office

KUALA LUMPUR: Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin took the bull by the horns in his first year in office to keep a deadly pandemic at bay as he micro-managed to put food on the table for Malaysians and ensure no one was left behind.

The Prime Minister, who helms the Perikatan Nasional government, has procured the Covid-19 vaccines and provided up to RM300bil in stimulus aid packages to ensure the survival of the people in a year of unprecedented difficulties.

In a special interview on his first year in office, Muhyiddin, 73, recalled the immediate challenges he had to face, especially the negative perception of the people towards him and the demand by his political foes for his resignation.

However, he ignored the odds and went ahead with his plans to take the country to greater heights, gaining more confidence among the people as he brought in the vaccines and took the first shot to dispel any fear over the immunisation.

Muhyiddin had taken over at a time when the world faced a difficult situation due to the pandemic.

"God willing, the Perikatan government completing one year in office with me as the Prime Minister is something that I had least expected, but it is all the will of Allah," he said during the interview at his residence in Bukit Damansara.

Muhyiddin, who became Malaysia's eighth Prime Minister on March 1 last year, said he carried out his duties for the sake of the people and nation.

"I'm doing what is best for the



One year later: Muhyiddin addressing members of the media during the interview at his residence in Bukit Damansara, Kuala Lumpur. — Bernama

nation. I know that I carry a trust. I have to fulfil that trust although I was not elected in a normal election," he said.

The premier found himself in an "extraordinary position" that demanded immediate action and a different approach from previous governments.

He went to work to keep the pandemic at bay and ensure that the people had jobs and food on the table and that the economy, security, public order and unity were maintained.

Striving hard to manage the pandemic through the whole-of-society approach, he was determined to do his best for the people to meet the challenge for Malaysia to become a developed nation by 2030.

"I will do my best. I want to leave

a legacy not for my own self but for the country during my tenure.

"So, that's my commitment. I can tell Malaysians that I am committed to upholding my responsibility.

"I'll do my very best. I'll fight corruption. I'll not interfere in judiciary. I will do what is best for the country," said Muhyiddin, who is also Pagoh MP.

Using a straightforward tone throughout the interview, he said the actions taken by the government to address the pandemic required all parties to work together.

He said through the committees under the National Security Council, Economic Action Council and other related committees, meetings and discussions were held daily to manage Covid-19 and its impact on the country.

Expressing gratitude for the smooth running of the administration, he said civil servants were committed to carrying out their responsibilities, security and public order were under control and unity was unaffected.

Muhyiddin also expressed gratitude to the people and urged them to remain united and resolute in facing the pandemic.

"The most immediate and extraordinary action was to enforce the movement control order on March 18 last year, followed by several levels of the MCO to balance the lives and livelihoods of the people and every sector affected by the pandemic," he said.

The president of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia was asked a wide range of questions pertaining to the government and national administration, management of Covid-19, the economic stimulus packages and government initiatives to help the people, the people's acceptance and achievements of the Perikatan government, the proclamation of emergency, Malaysia's foreign policy, as well as his aspirations.

He was also asked about the national Covid-19 immunisation programme which reflected the determination of the government to ensure the well-being of the people.

On Wednesday, Muhyiddin was the first to be vaccinated to dispel any fears over immunisation against the disease. — Bernama

For a transcript of the full interview, go to [TheStar.com.my](https://www.thestar.com.my)