

MCO was a necessary move, says Muhyiddin

'Drastic action needed to save lives and avoid health catastrophe'

KUALA LUMPUR: Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin says the decision to implement the movement control order, despite not being popular with the people, was a necessary move.

The Prime Minister said if no firm and drastic action was taken, the country could plunge into a health catastrophe and face a national crisis.

He said the MCO was needed to save lives.

"I know, this is not a popular decision. Some are angry with me (and ask) why resort to this when Muslims will celebrate 1 Syawal (today).

"You can't travel back to your hometown and can't even visit family and friends. Is this government

really cruel?

"I am not a tyrant. I made this decision to protect all your lives. If I allow house-to-house visits, there is the possibility of guests who are Covid-19 positive visiting your home," he said in his Hari Raya Aidilfitri message broadcast over local TV stations last night.

Muhyiddin said if house-to-house visits were allowed, many could possibly be infected as most Covid-19 patients did not show any symptoms.

This could likely cause Covid-19 cases in the country to soar to tens of thousands a day, he added.

The Prime Minister said the situation was at a critical point which required an immediate response



Getting in the festive spirit at home: A'in Syahira hanging cooked ketupat at her house. Muhyiddin said if house-to-house visits are allowed, many could possibly be infected as most Covid-19 patients do not show any symptoms. — Bernama

from the government.

"We have once again enforced inter-district and interstate travel bans as well as barred social and education activities and also sports except for individual sports in open areas.

"Hari Raya visits are also not allowed. Aidilfitri prayers in mosques and surau are allowed but with a limited number in attendance," he said.

Muhyiddin, however, said compared with last year, more Muslims were able to perform terawih

prayers at mosques and surau this year by adhering to the SOP.

He also said that despite the MCO being implemented, the government had not shut down the economic and industrial sectors and allowed businesses, subject to strict SOPs, to continue.

Based on previous experience, he said the country stood to lose almost RM2.4bil a day and unemployment would increase if the economic sector was shut down, adding that this could be detrimental.

"Therefore, this time the govern-

ment will not close the economic sector, but strict monitoring will be done on business premises, factories and hostels where workers live to prevent infection in related sectors," he said.

Muhyiddin called on employers and employees to always adhere to the SOP in place and also implement a work-from-home policy.

He also expressed the highest appreciation to all frontliners for their tireless service, hard work and sacrifices to ensure the well-being and safety of all. — Bernama