

CMCO allows economy and supply chain to continue without disruption - DG Noor Hisham

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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 13 -- The Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) allows the economy and supply chain to continue without disruption despite a restriction on social and education sectors, Health director-general, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said.

He acknowledged that it is a challenge to safeguard and strike a balance between health and economy from COVID-19.

“(But) A lost of balance means lost of lives and loss of livelihoods. Conditional MCO allows the economy and supply chain to continue without disruption but restriction on social and education sectors,” he said in the micro-blogging site Twitter as the CMCO is imposed in Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya beginning tomorrow as new cases reported were consistent in the three areas every day.

The number of new COVID-19 positive cases in Malaysia remained at three digits yesterday, with 563 cases reported to take the cumulative tally to 16,220. The number of active cases also rose to 5,039, while two fatalities were reported to take the death toll to 159.

At a press conference yesterday, Noor Hisham said even though the new cases recorded daily were less than 100, they were scattered and have started to spread in Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya as well as all districts in Selangor except for Sabak Bernam.

The government cannot wait until the yellow zones turn into the red before implementing the CMCO or the Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO), he said at a virtual media conference aired over the Health Ministry’s Facebook site.

Dr Noor Hisham explained that the risk evaluation on whether the situation was bad or otherwise did not depend solely on daily positive cases as there was also a need to look at the pattern of infection spreading in a state.

“So if the infection is focused on one or two districts, the approach of the Targeted Movement Control Order may be implemented.”

"However if the spread of infection is in every district, in the state with new cases scattered in Selangor and Klang Valley (Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya), this means the spread could not be contained effectively," he said.

Last week in a special address, Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the government has no plan to implement the Movement Control Order (MCO) nationwide again as it could lead to the collapse of the country's economy.

“So far, we have not considered implementing a nationwide MCO or a total lockdown.

“The measure, if it were implemented again, could have a major impact that we're afraid would destroy the country's social system and economy,” he said.

Therefore, he said, the government would implement the Targeted Enhanced Movement Control Order (TEMCO) in areas identified as having high COVID-19 cases.

Malaysia's economy dipped 17.1 per cent in the second quarter (Q2) of 2020 as the country went into lockdown with strong enforcement to stem the spread of COVID-19. In the second quarter of 2019, the country recorded a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 4.9 per cent.

Malaysia imposed the MCO on March 18, 2020, which was eventually eased to Conditional MCO on May 4 and Recovery MCO from June 10 to Dec 31, 2020, during which the economy has been gradually opened up.

Bank Negara Malaysia (Malaysia's Central Bank) has revised its 2020 GDP growth forecast to -5.5 to -3.5 per cent from -2 to 0.5 per cent previously, as the initial

assumption was based on a lockdown period of only four weeks instead of seven weeks.

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