

Muhyiddin says difficult to contain COVID-19 during elections in near term

30 Oct 2020

MUAR, Oct 30 -- Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin today acknowledged that it will be difficult to contain the spread of COVID-19 during the Sarawak state election, if it is held soon, and the Batu Sapi parliamentary by-election set for Dec 5.

He said the Election Commission (EC) has also admitted that nobody else can help go down to the ground to help it conduct the elections due to the fear of the disease.

“The Batu Sapi by-election is to be held soon. Not long after that will be the Sarawak state election. I am not sure how we are going to keep COVID-19 in check then.

“The EC is saying that nobody else is prepared to help it conduct the Batu Sapi by-election on the ground due to the fear of COVID-19,” he said when addressing community leaders of his Pagoh parliamentary constituency at a meeting at the Pagoh Sports Complex here.

The EC has set Nov 23 for nomination, Dec 1 for early voting and Dec 5 for polling for the Batu Sapi by-election. The Sarawak state election is due sometime in the middle of next year.

Muhyiddin said he has consulted EC chairman Datuk Abdul Ghani Salleh on imposing campaign restrictions for elections.

“By campaigning virtually, with the use of handphones and via radio and television, it is possible to reduce the spread of the disease,” he said.

The prime minister said the Sarawak state election will surely see thousands of Sarawakians working in the peninsula returning to their state to vote in the election, and one can imagine the difficulty in containing the spread of the disease.

“Some of these people will be from COVID-19 red zones, but they will want to go back to their villages and hometowns in Sarawak to vote,” he said.

He also said that Sarawak is a huge state and thousands of election workers will be required to conduct the election but whether people will come forward to help the EC is another matter, something that is worrying.

-- **BERNAMA**

Source: <https://www.bernama.com/en/general/news.php?id=1895455>

Copyrights 2020