



UNOFFICIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION

PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA IMPLEMENTATION OF A MOVEMENT CONTROL ORDER (MCO)

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.

Assalamuálaikum warahmatullahi wa barakatuh and salam sejahtera.

How are you all doing? I hope you are healthy and well.

1. Malaysia began recording four-digit daily cases for COVID-19 on 24 October 2020 (a total of 1,228 cases). Commencing end-November 2020, the phenomenon of four-digit daily cases of COVID-19 was recorded daily until the highest record was reported on 7 January 2021, which was 3,027 cases.
2. In this third wave which started on 20 September 2020, a total of 476 new clusters were reported until 10 January 2021 involving 259 workplace clusters (54.41%). This data shows a significant increase in the number of new clusters in the third wave compared to 110 new clusters recorded during the second wave with 25 workplace clusters (22.72%).
3. In total, 586 clusters were recorded up to 10 January 2021 with 48.46% of them being clusters involving workplaces. Of these, 254 clusters are still active while 332 clusters have been declared as ended.
4. During the third wave of COVID-19 infection transmission in Malaysia, the trend of import cases was found to be controlled but local transmission cases continued to increase involving non-citizens and citizens.
5. At the beginning of the third wave on 20 September 2020, cases were more concentrated on non-citizens, at 63% and only 37% involved citizens. But current developments show that infection among citizens is increasing. As of 11 January 2021, as many as 70% of COVID-19 positive cases in Malaysia involve citizens and only 30% are non-citizens.
6. Based on the current R-naught value which is at the level of 1.1 for the COVID-19 susceptibility rate in Malaysia, the projected daily cases in the country are expected to reach up to 5,000 cases per day in the second week of April 2021 and will jump to 8,000 cases per day in the fourth week of May 2021.



7. The higher the R-naught value, the harder it will be to control the transmission because more and more people have been infected. The implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO) in March successfully reduced the value of R to 0.335, thus reducing cases of COVID-19 infection to one (1) to two (2) digits per day.

8. This trend is very worrying and the Government is aware that a more rigorous approach must be taken to break the chain of transmission of COVID-19, thus reducing the number of daily positive cases to a controlled level that can be managed more effectively.

9. The Government listens to complaints and suggestions from the people as a whole who are very worried about the recent increase in cases. The Government is also very aware of the workload faced by our health workers due to the sharp increase in cases. Our frontliners are getting tired and the country's public healthcare system is being overwhelmed.

10. At this time, Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) facilities are no longer able to accommodate the increase of up to 2,000 new cases per day. Our healthcare system is at breaking point. I would like to explain the reality of the health system situation we are currently facing:

I. Fifteen (15) COVID-19 hospitals record a COVID-19 (non-ICU) bed usage rate of over 70 percent.

II. In the Klang Valley, the rate of ICU bed use for COVID-19 patients at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital and at the University of Malaya Medical Center has reached 100 percent while it has reached 83 percent at the Sungai Buloh Hospital. Meanwhile, the rate of ICU bed usage for COVID-19 patients in five (5) states namely Perak, Selangor, Melaka, Terengganu and Sarawak has exceeded 70 percent.

III. Currently, there are more than 1,450 medical personnel in hospitals nationwide who have been infected or are under quarantine orders and unable to work.



IV. The number of deaths due to COVID-19 has continued to increase to 521 cases with a mortality rate of 0.41 percent. Malaysia recorded more than 100 deaths per month for October to December 2020 compared to two (2) to 59 deaths per month for March to September 2020.

V. The high increase in daily cases has led to delays in health staff taking patients from home to the hospital and to the COVID-19 Quarantine and Low Risk Treatment Center (PKRC).

VI. Flood disasters and increasing cases in some states also complicate the process of mobilizing members within the state and also between states. This makes it difficult to increase the number of ICU beds for critically ill patients.

11. In dealing with this COVID-19 pandemic, it is very important for any country to avoid the incidence of a sudden increase in cases in a short period of time.

12. A sudden increase in the number of patients will cripple the capacity of the existing health system in the blink of an eye. It is no longer able to accommodate the number of patients in need of treatment and the death toll will continue to rise.

13. It is not easy for me to say all this but this is the reality happening now with the various possibilities we have to face if left unchecked without any stricter interventions or public health interventions.

14. The situation today is indeed very alarming. Our healthcare system is under tremendous pressure now than at any other time since the start of the pandemic. As I have said before, unprecedented situations call for unprecedented measures.

15. Therefore, based on the risk assessment by the Ministry of Health Malaysia, the National Security Council (NSC) and various Ministries and Agencies as well as the advice of public health experts in the country, the Government agrees with the view that firm action must be taken to curb transmission of the COVID-19 virus.



16. With that, the Government has decided to implement a **Movement Control Order (MCO)** for a period of 14 days starting at 12.01 midnight, Wednesday, 13 January 2021 until 26 January 2021. This order involves three stages of implementation as follows:

- a. First, a **Movement Control Order (MCO)** on six (6) states namely **Penang, Selangor, the Federal Territories (Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya and Labuan), Melaka, Johor and Sabah.**
- b. Second, a **Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO)** in six (6) states namely **Pahang, Perak, Negeri Sembilan, Kedah, Terengganu and Kelantan.**
- c. Third, a **Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO)** will be implemented for the states of **Perlis and Sarawak** and will continue throughout the period.

17. The states subject to an **MCO** are states that are deemed as high risk by the risk assessment conducted by MOH and the level of its health service capability has almost reached maximum capacity. MOH will continuously assess the risk to decide whether the implementation of this MCO will be ended or continued before the two-week period expires.

18. To reduce the risk of infection and break the COVID-19 chain, social activities involving mass gatherings such as weddings, conferences, religious celebrations including Thaipusam, meetings, seminars, courses and group sports are **NOT ALLOWED** at all. However, for states under a CMCO, social activities are allowed, subject to strict SOP compliance. **Inter-state movement is NOT ALLOWED** throughout the country while for **MCO areas, inter-district movement is also NOT ALLOWED.**

19. Following the ban on movement across these states and districts, **roadblock operations (sekatan jalan raya [SJR]) will take effect at 12.01 midnight, Wednesday, 13 January 2021.** For **MCO** states, movement is **limited within a 10 kilometer radius only.** For the purpose of purchasing necessities from a nearby supermarket or grocery store, **ONLY TWO (2) household members** are allowed to go out and be in the same vehicle. Any individual who violates this prohibition can be fined a maximum of RM1,000.



20. For the economic sector, the Government has identified five (5) sectors which will be allowed to operate and categorized as essential economic sectors namely **manufacturing and production, construction, services, trade and distribution, as well as plantation and commodities.**

21. These sectors are allowed to operate because of their role in supporting the supply of basic necessities such as food, beverages and household items as well as personal care; PPE equipment, medical devices and medicines to healthcare workers; international trade activities; ensuring uninterrupted supply chains and supporting critical infrastructure and emergency work.

22. However, **only 30 percent of employees in the management group** are allowed to be in the office while for employees in the support group, the number of employees required at any given time will be determined by their respective employers. I would like to remind you that the specified number of employees **must take into account strict compliance of prescribed SOPs.** Do not allow a situation of no physical distancing while at the workplace to happen. Any employer who violates SOPs and causes the spread of a COVID-19 infection in the workplace will have strict action taken against them based on the law, including closure of the affected premises.

23. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) will list the types of services listed as essential economic sectors. MITI and the Ministry of Works will also provide details of construction works allowed to operate.

24. For sectors or services not listed as essential services, **working from home or work from home orders** will take effect. All employers must adhere to this order to reduce movement within the community, especially in high-density areas. Only with this measure, we can reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection in the workplace.

25. During the **MCO** period, restaurants and hawker stalls are allowed to operate **ONLY** for take away services while for **CMCO and RMCO** areas, both are allowed to operate as usual according to the prescribed SOPs. Food delivery services are allowed to operate.

26. Supermarkets, health services including clinics, hospitals and pharmacies; as well as banks are allowed to operate in **MCO** areas at a cautious level. Obey SOPs



while in these places such as wearing a face mask properly, maintain physical distance and use hand sanitizer often. If there is no immediate or urgent reason, then there is no need to leave the house. Stay at home.

27. The Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) has provided assurances that supply in all retail sectors is adequate. Monitoring of consumer necessities such as sugar, cooking oil, wheat flour, rice, white bread, milk powder, chicken, vegetables, eggs, onions, hand sanitizer and face masks will be done daily.

28. Although there are strict movement restrictions, especially in states where an **MCO** is imposed, exemptions are given to students and candidates for major examinations including SPM examinations for the 2020 and 2021 sessions. They are allowed to attend schools with strict SOPs. The Ministry of Education Malaysia will provide details for this SOP.

29. For religious activities, only committee members of mosques or houses of worship are allowed to attend in states subject to an MCO with a maximum of 5 people. For states subject to a CMCO or RMCO, religious activities are still allowed with the minimum number of attendance stipulated in the SOP. State religious authorities are advised to provide appropriate stipulations in determining the amount of attendance allowed.

30. I am also aware that isolation for a long period of time can put stress on mental health. Therefore, to ensure continuous mental and physical health, you are allowed to leave the house to enjoy recreational activities with only members of the same household. Make sure your distance from others is two (2) meters at a time. If you wish to jog, do not exceed more than two (2) people and if cycling, do not go in groups. One person is enough.

31. The next two weeks are very important not only for ourselves but also the whole country. All the freedoms we sacrifice - losing contact with friends, being in isolation at home, and having difficulty doing social activities outside - will save our lives.

32. This virus is already in the community and lives among us. Let us not feel too comfortable and end up neglecting the precautionary measures which are so



easy for us to practice such as washing our hands often with soap, wearing face masks properly, maintaining physical distance and avoiding physical contact.

33. I would like to invite community leaders to care for and protect their respective communities from becoming a place of transmission of COVID-19 infection. You are all frontliners in your community in the fight against this virus. Collaborate with district health offices, community health clinics and even district councils to educate your community members so that they also know how to best prevent this COVID-19 infection.

34. As proof of the government's commitment to empower the community, a high-level committee chaired by the Chief Secretary of State along with the Minister of Special Functions has been formed to ensure a more effective implementation of community empowerment measures.

35. Assume that the virus is in us so that we always stay vigilant and are not complacent in complying with the prescribed SOPs. We laugh outside with friends and family, but we often forget all the SOPs and our health workers who struggle, sacrifice time with family and have no one to complain to, to control the spread of this COVID-19 infection.

36. I would also like to take this opportunity to announce that the Phase Three Clinical Trials of the COVID-19 vaccine will begin on 21 January 2021 in nine (9) MOH Hospitals under the management of the respective Clinical Research Centers (CRC).

37. The first clinical study conducted in Malaysia is expected to involve 3,000 volunteers and Malaysia will be the first country outside of China for the study of the inactivated COVID-19 vaccine candidate made by the Institute of Medical Biology Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, China (IMBCAMS). All regulatory requirements including ethical approval from the Medical Review & Ethics Committee (MREC) and finally, the Clinical Trial Import License (CTIL) from NPRA were obtained on 8 January 2021.

38. In addition, the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Division (NPRA) of the Ministry of Health (MOH) has also approved registration of the COVID-19 vaccine produced by Pfizer. Therefore, **Malaysia is expected to receive the supply of Pfizer vaccine for the first phase at the end of February**, God willing.



As preliminary preparation to ensure that the distribution of COVID-19 vaccine to the people of this country runs smoothly when supplies are obtained, MOH has developed the **National COVID-19 Immunization Program Plan**.

39. To achieve herd immunity, as much as 60-70 percent or 20-23 million of the Malaysian population must be given the COVID-19 vaccine. Currently, the government has signed a preliminary agreement with the COVAX facility, Pfizer and AstraZeneca for the procurement of COVID-19 vaccine to ensure a vaccine supply that covers 40 percent of the population. The government is also in final negotiations with Sinovac, CanSino and Gamaleya to secure a vaccine supply increase of more than 80 percent for the country's total population or 26.5 million.

40. The Government will ensure that only vaccines that meet safety, quality and efficacy standards will be registered and used in Malaysia. This evaluation process is made by the Product Evaluation Committee of the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Division (NPRO) for approval and the Drug Control Authority for the purpose of registration before the COVID-19 vaccine can be used in Malaysia.

41. I would like to remind all citizens including myself to continue to comply with all SOPs that have been set. Yes it is true we will receive a supply of vaccines soon but that is not the only preventive measure and certainly not a cure.

42. The primary method prevention starts with ourselves observing the practice of washing our hands using soap regularly, using hand sanitizer if there is no water source nearby, wearing a face mask when in public places, keeping physical distance and avoiding physical contact.

43. Together, we have the opportunity to curb and break the transmission chain of COVID-19 from getting worse. I sincerely hope that all the advice and warnings I convey today will be fully complied with at all levels of society.

44. I guarantee that the Government will do its best to provide protection to all citizens. And I also appeal to all of you to do your best to protect each other, the community and society. Only by uniting against this virus, can we win. God willing.



Thank you. *Wabillahi taufiq wal hidayah wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.*

YAB TAN SRI DATO 'HAJI MUHYIDDIN BIN HAJI MOHD YASSIN
JANUARY 11, 2021

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