AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Al-Sultan Abdullah menerima menghadap rombongan Kementerian Kesihatan diketuai Dr Dzulkefly di Istana Negara, semalam. - (Foto ihsan Instagram Istana Negara)

Seri Paduka zahir penghargaan petugas barisan hadapan

Kuala Lumpur: Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah menerima menghadap rombongan Kementerian Kesihatan bagi memaklumkan perkembangan dan situasi penularan novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) di negara ini, di Istana Negara di sini, semalam.

Majlis menghadap itu diketuai Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad yang turut disertai Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah dan Timbalan Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan (Kesihatan Awam), Datuk Dr Chong Chee Kheong berlangsung kira-kira satu jam.

Noor Hisham berkata dalam pertemuan itu, baginda menzahirkan setinggi-tinggi penghargaan kepada semua petugas di barisan hadapan yang bersiap siaga mengawal keselamatan dan kesihatan negara.

Dr Noor Hisham yang menulis di Facebook, berkata baginda juga mengingatkan rakyat supaya tidak menyebarkan maklumat dan berita palsu mengenai 2019-nCoV.

Selasa lalu, Yang di-Pertuan Agong yang sentiasa mengikuti perkembangan terkini berkenaan wabak itu menitahkan semua masjid di seluruh negara mengadakan solat hajat dan doa selamat memohon ihsan Allah SWT memelihara rakyat daripada sebarang penyakit yang tidak diingini.

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Satu lagi kes positif 2019-nCoV

Kuala Lumpur: Satu lagi kes positif coronavirus (2019-nCoV) dilaporkan semalam, menjadikan jumlah keseluruhan kes yang disahkan meningkat kepada lapan.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata kes terbaru itu direkodkan berlaku dalam kalangan kontak rapat iaitu isteri kepada kes 2019-nCoV ketujuh yang dilaporkan di Johor, kelmarin.

Kes kelapan ini membabitkan pesakit warga China berusia 49 tahun yang sudah dimasukkan ke wad isolasi di Hospital Permai, Johor dan dilaporkan stabil.

"Ini menjadikan jumlah kumulatif kes positif 2019-nCoV yang dilaporkan sehingga hari ini (semalam) adalah lapan kes, iaitu tiga kes yang sebelum ini dilaporkan dalam kalangan kes Pengesanan Kes Yang Disyaki (PUI) jangkitan 2019-nCoV dan lima kes yang sebelum ini dalam kalangan kontak rapat.

"Semua kes positif 2019-nCoV setakat ini membabitkan warga China," katanya dalam kenyataan, semalam.

Jumlah kumulatif kes PUI bagi jangkitan 2019-nCoV adalah 89 orang yang direkodkan dari 10 Januari hingga kelmarin.

Daripada jumlah itu, 44 kes membabitkan warga Malaysia; 42 (China) dan masing-masing satu warganegara Jordan, Brazil dan Thailand.

Beliau berkata, tiga kes PUI disahkan positif 2019-nCoV dan sudah dimasukkan ke wad isolasi iaitu dua di Hospital Permai dan satu di Hospital Sultanah Maliha, Langkawi.

81 kes PUI lagi adalah negatif dengan baki lima masih menunggu keputusan ujian makmal.

Beliau berkata, bagi memantapkan lagi aktiviti pengesanan kes yang disyaki, KKM dengan kerjasama Kementerian Pendidikan mengenal pasti pelajar atau pensyarah yang pulang bercuti dari China dengan meletakkan mereka di bawah pemantauan di rumah dan diberikan Kad Amaran Kesihatan dan Alatan Penilaian Rumah.

"Sekiranya pelajar atau pensyarah terbabit menunjukkan gejala, mereka akan dirujuk ke fasiliti kesihatan yang sudah dikenal pasti dengan segera," katanya.

> *Kes terbaru itu direkodkan berlaku dalam kalangan kontak rapat iaitu isteri kepada kes 2019-nCoV ketujuh yang dilaporkan di Johor, kelmarin.*
>
> **Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah,** *Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan*

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Situasi semasa tak perlukan orang awam pakai penutup mulut

Putrajaya: Situasi semasa penularan coronavirus ketika ini tidak memerlukan orang awam memakai penutup mulut dan hidung ketika di tempat umum kerana tiada jangkitan kuman itu dalam negara.

Pakar Perunding Penyakit Berjangkit, Hospital Sungai Buloh, Dr Benedict Sim, berkata pada asasnya, tiada keperluan mendesak untuk orang ramai di negara ini memakai alat pelindung pernafasan berkenaan buat masa ini.

Katanya, penularan coronavirus di Malaysia tidak mencapai tahap membimbangkan kerana tiada jangkitan kuman itu di negara kita setakat ini.

"Namun, jika orang awam mahu memakai juga, ia adalah langkah yang baik sebagai usaha pencegahan.

"Pada asasnya, tiada keperluan mendesak untuk memakainya.

"Terpulang kepada sesiapa yang mahu memakai penutup hidung dan mulut sebagai langkah pencegahan.

Pada asasnya, tiada keperluan mendesak untuk memakainya. Terpulang kepada sesiapa mahu pakai penutup hidung dan mulut sebagai langkah pencegahan.

Dr Benedict Sim
Pakar Perunding Penyakit Berjangkit, Hospital Sungai Buloh

"Kita faham, situasi semasa mencetuskan rasa panik dalam kalangan orang ramai dan mengutamakan kebersihan diri," katanya pada sesi taklimat isu jangkitan coronavirus di Kementerian Kesihatan, semalam.

Sementara itu, Dr Benedick menjelaskan, penutup mulut dan hidung tiga lapis adalah paling sesuai digunakan berbanding jenis satu lapis serta N95.

Katanya, jenis tiga lapis lebih selamat kerana boleh menghalang virus tersebar melalui udara jika individu terkena titisan cecair dari hidung atau mulut mereka yang dijangkiti coronavirus.

"Penutup mulut dan hidung yang sesuai adalah tiga lapis. Penggunaan penutup hidung N95 menyebabkan rasa tidak selesa dan kesukaran bernafas kepada pengguna, kita tidak menggalakkan penggunaan penutup mulut dan hidung jenis satu lapis dan N95," katanya.

Beliau juga mengingatkan, penutup mulut dan hidung perlu ditukar dalam tempoh beberapa jam kerana ia biasanya menjadi lembab.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO
MUKA SURAT : 2A
RUANGAN : LOKAL

KAKITANGAN Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan menggunakan penyukat suhu dahi bagi mengukur suhu badan pelancong kanak-kanak yang tiba di jeti Terminal Feri Antarabangsa Labuan bagi mencegah penularan jangkitan 2019 Novel Koronavirus (2019-nCoV).

Seorang lagi positif

Wanita isteri kepada lelaki warga China jadi mangsa terbaharu

VIRUS WUHAN

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Kuala Lumpur

Satu lagi kes positif koronavirus baharu membabitkan seorang wanita warga China dikesan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM), semalam.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, wanita terbabit isteri kepada lelaki warga China yang dilaporkan positif wabak sama sebelum ini.

Menurutnya, perkembangan terbaru ini menjadi lapan kes membabitkan koronavirus baharu dilaporkan di Malaysia dan semuanya membabitkan warga China.

"Kes terbaharu ini warganegara China berusia 49 tahun yang dimasukkan ke wad isolasi di Hospital Permai, Johor dan dilaporkan dalam keadaan stabil.

"Dari 10 Januari sehingga semalam, jumlah kumulatif kes pesakit mengikut pemantauan (PUI) 89 dengan 44 warganegara Malaysia, 42 warga China dan masing-masing satu (1) warga Jordan, Brazil dan Thailand.

"Tiga kes PUI sudah disahkan positif koronavirus baharu dan dimasukkan ke wad isolasi di Hospital Permai (dua orang) dan Hospital Sultanah Maliha, Langkawi (seorang). Manakala 81 kes PUI negatif dan lima kes masih menunggu keputusan makmal," katanya.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, seramai 32 kontak rapat kepada kes positif sudah dikenal pasti dan diletakkan mengikut Perintah Pemantauan dan Pengasingan serta dipantau rapi oleh KKM.

Katanya, daripada jumlah ini, lima kes daripada kontak rapat itu disahkan positif dan dimasukkan ke wad isolasi masing-masing empat di Hospital Sungai Buloh dan seorang di Hospital Permai dan semua stabil.

"Ujian makmal ke atas 27 kontak rapat lagi didapati negatif jangkitan.

Seramai 32 kontak rapat kepada kes positif sudah dikenal pasti

KKM sentiasa memastikan kesiapsiagaan dan respons terhadap wabak penyakit berjangkit dapat dilaksanakan dengan cepat dan baik.

Tambahnya, kapasiti dan keupayaan sedia ada dipertingkatkan bagi menangani jangkitan koronavirus baharu ini seperti yang dimaklumkan selain memantapkan aktiviti pengesanan kes yang disyaki.

Menurutnya, KKM dengan kerjasama Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia bekerjasama mengenal pasti pelajar atau pensyarah yang pulang bercuti dari negara China dan akan diletakkan di bawah pemantauan di rumah dan diberikan Kad Amaran Kesihatan sekiranya dikenal pasti.

Pengeluar tingkatkan pengeluaran

Kuala Lumpur: Pengeluar topeng hidung dan mulut tempatan akan meningkatkan pengeluaran mereka bagi menampung permintaan tinggi orang ramai susulan isu 2019 koronavirus baharu.

Menteri Perdagangan Dalam Negeri dan Hal Ehwal Pengguna (KPDNHEP), Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution berkata, pihaknya mengadakan perbincangan dengan pihak pengeluar berhubung perkara tersebut.

"Sekarang ini permintaan begitu tinggi dan bekalan sekarang tidak dapat menampung permintaan. (Saya dimaklumkan) Bekalan berkurangan kerana banyak kilang yang tutup kerana cuti sempena sambutan Tahun Baru Cina.

"Kita dah maklum pada pihak pengeluar dan mereka akan meningkatkan pengeluaran mereka," katanya kepada pemberita selepas majlis perasmian Kempen Beli Barangan Malaysia bersama sebuah pasar raya di sini, semalam.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

8 kes koronavirus di Malaysia

KES 1 - 3
Seorang wanita warga emas China berusia 66 tahun serta dua cucunya berumur 11 dan dua tahun yang merupakan keluarga terdekat kepada kes pertama yang berlaku di Singapura.

KES 4
Seorang lelaki berusia 40 tahun berasal dari Wuhan, China yang tiba di Johor Bahru pada 22 Januari lalu dengan menaiki bas dari Singapura. Mangsa tidak mempunyai kaitan dengan tiga pesakit terawal.

KES 5
Seorang kanak-kanak berusia empat tahun kini dirawat di wad pengasingan Hospital Sultanah Maliha, Langkawi.

KES 6
Seorang wanita yang merupakan menantu kepada mangsa pertama kes koronavirus di Singapura. Kes itu direkodkan di Hospital Sungai Buloh.

KES 7
Seorang lelaki China berusia 52 tahun yang kini dirawat di wad pengasingan Hospital Sultanah Aminah, Johor Bahru.

KES 8
Wanita berusia 49 tahun merupakan isteri kepada pesakit ketujuh. Pesakit dimasukkan ke Hospital Permai, Johor dan berada dalam keadaan stabil.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : ANCAMAN KORONAVIRUS DI CHINA

Jumlah mangsa di Malaysia meningkat lapan orang

PUTRAJAYA - Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) semalam mengesahkan satu lagi kes positif koronavirus di negara ini melibatkan seorang warga China.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, pesakit berusia 49 tahun itu merupakan isteri kepada pesakit ketujuh positif koronavirus.

"Pesakit dimasukkan di Hospital Permai, Johor dan berada dalam keadaan stabil," katanya dalam satu kenyataan semalam.

Dengan kes terbaharu itu, Malaysia mencatatkan lapan kes positif koronavirus dan kesemuanya melibatkan warga China.

"Sehingga jam 9 pagi ini (semalam), lima kes disyaki mengalami simptom koronavirus dikuarantin sementara menunggu keputusan ujian makmal," katanya.

Sementara itu, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, KKM bekerjasama dengan Kementerian Pendidikan untuk mengenal pasti pelajar atau pensyarah yang pulang bercuti dari China.

"Mereka yang telah dikenal pasti akan diletakkan di bawah pemantauan di rumah dan diberikan Kad Amaran Kesihatan dan *Home Assessment Tool*.

"Sekiranya mereka ini menunjukkan gejala, pelajar atau pensyarah ini akan dirujuk ke fasiliti kesihatan yang telah dikenal pasti dengan segera," katanya.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : ANCAMAN KORONAVIRUS DI CHINA

Jawatankuasa khas bawa pulang rakyat Malaysia diaktifkan

PUTRAJAYA - Sebuah jawatankuasa khas bagi misi bantuan kemanusiaan membawa pulang rakyat Malaysia dari wilayah Hubei, China diaktifkan semalam susulan penularan koronavirus di wilayah berkenaan, kata Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

Beliau berkata, jawatankuasa itu diselaraskan oleh Agensi Pengurusan Bencana Negara (Nadma) bersama dengan Kementerian Luar, Kementerian Kesihatan, Angkatan Tentera Malaysia dan Majlis Keselamatan Negara.

"Jawatankuasa itu bertujuan mengatur proses membawa pulang warga Malaysia dan keluarga mereka dari kota Wuhan di wilayah Hubei, China.

"Gerak misi bantuan sedang diatur dengan Wisma Putra bagi mengumpul jumlah sebenar rakyat Malaysia untuk dibawa pulang," katanya pada sidang media memaklumkan perkembangan terkini isu koronavirus di sini semalam.

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, Wisma Putra turut meneruskan perbincangan dengan pihak berkuasa China berhubung misi itu.

Beliau berkata, turut menganggotai jawatankuasa itu adalah syarikat penerbangan AirAsia dan Malaysia Airlines Berhad. -*Bernama*

FOTO: BERNAMA

Dr. Dzulkefly pada sidang media di Putrajaya semalam mengenai perkembangan terkini penularan jangkitan koronavirus.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 6
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Malaysia proaktif bendung jangkitan

Kuala Lumpur: Tindakan Malaysia membendung penularan jangkitan novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) disifatkan lebih bersedia, pantas serta proaktif berbanding ketika berdepan wabak berbahaya seperti Sindrom Pernafasan Akut Teruk (SARS), virus Nipah serta Ebola.

Pakar penyakit berjangkit, Datuk Dr Christopher K C Lee, berkata berdasarkan pengalaman negara dalam mengawal kes penyakit berjangkit terdahulu menjadikan Malaysia lebih bersedia termasuk meningkatkan tahap imbasan kesihatan di semua pintu masuk negara serta pengasingan mereka yang dijangkiti virus itu.

Katanya, langkah pantas seumpama itu penting bagi mengurangkan potensi berlakunya *local transmission* penyakit itu di dalam negara.

"Berbanding ketika SARS pada 2002, kita ambil masa berminggu-minggu untuk mengesan wabak itu, kini dengan pengalaman, kepakaran dan teknologi kita mampu mengesan wabak itu lebih awal.

"Kita (negara) sekarang dalam fasa 'pembendungan', untuk menyekat ia daripada sebarang penularan di sini. Lapan kes sehingga semalam bukan dijangkiti dalam Malaysia tetapi di luar negara dan dibawa masuk ke negara ini," katanya ketika dihubungi semalam.

Dr Christopher berkata, selain kaedah imbasan haba, hebahan makluman dan informasi kepada setiap pelancong yang masuk ke Malaysia khususnya dari kawasan yang dijangkiti juga penting.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Yang di-Pertuan Agong titah jangan sebar berita palsu koronavirus

SHAH ALAM - Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Al-Sultan Abdullah Riayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah bertitah mengingatkan rakyat supaya tidak menyebarkan maklumat dan berita palsu berkaitan penularan wabak Koronavirus tanpa usul periksa.

Seri Paduka turut menzahirkan setinggi-tinggi penghargaan kepada semua petugas di barisan hadapan yang sentiasa bersedia mengawal keselamatan dan kesihatan negara.

Perkara tersebut dimaklumkan oleh Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah menerusi hantaran di Facebook beliau semalam selepas Yang di-Pertuan Agong berkenan menerima sembah maklum situasi semasa kejadian jangkitan koronavirus di Malaysia pada jam 11 pagi semalam.

"Seri Paduka meluangkan masa satu jam mendengar penerangan mengenai perkembangan penularan wabak tersebut," kata Dr Noor Hisham.

Turut menghadap Yang di-Pertuan Agong ialah Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN : STORY OF THE DAY/NEWS

IN ISOLATION WARD

MINISTRY CONFIRMS 8TH CASE

Latest patient is wife of Chinese national who was a confirmed case in Johor

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THE Health Ministry has confirmed the eighth novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) infection in the country.

The 49-year-old, also a tourist from China, had been admitted to an isolation ward in Permai Hospital in Johor.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the patient was the wife of a Chinese national who was a confirmed case for 2019-nCoV infection in Johor on Wednesday.

"The cumulative Person Under Investigation (PUI) cases between Jan 10 and Jan 30 is 94 people, where 48 are Malaysians, 43 are Chinese nationals, and one each from Jordan, Brazil and Thailand.

"Three cases tested positive for 2019-nCoV, 84 tested negative and seven are still awaiting lab test results," he said at a press conference at his ministry here yesterday.

He added that 32 close contacts of those who tested positive for 2019-nCoV had been identified. Of the total, five tested positive for the virus and had been placed in isolation wards.

All patients were reported to be in stable condition, he said.

Dr Dzulkefly said the ministry could not confirm if the 39-year-old mother who tested positive for the virus on Jan 29 was infected through human-to-human transmission.

The woman, who is the daughter-in-law to the first 2019-nCoV case in Singapore, had been taking care of her two sons, who tested positive for 2019-nCoV in Sungai Buloh Hospital.

"We don't know if the infection happened earlier in Wuhan, or because she has been in close contact with patients who have tested positive.

"Keep in mind that the 2019-nCoV can be asymptomatic, and the incubation period for the virus is around 14 days," he said, adding that the case was under investigation.

He gave his assurance that the ministry was getting all the information on the worldwide health concern from countries like Vietnam, Japan and China to better understand symptoms from the viral infection and its exact incubation period.

The Health Ministry, he added, was working with the Education Ministry to identify students or lecturers who had returned from their holiday in China.

"Those who have been identified (as having been to China) will be isolated at home. They will be monitored and will be issued a Health Alert Card and a Home Assessment Tool to help them get better.

"If they show any symptom, they would be referred to health facilities immediately."

Dr Dzulkefly said the government yesterday had set up a special humanitarian task force to bring back Malaysians in Hubei province in China.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 3
RUANGAN : STORY OF THE DAY/NEWS

People wearing face masks while taking public transport in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAÂLI

The task force would be coordinated by the National Disaster Management Agency, together with the Foreign and Health Ministries.

"It will liaise with other relevant agencies, such as airline companies, like AirAsia and Malaysia Airlines. A technical committee was also formed under this task force, which will cover the management aspects and help organise the mission."

He said the Foreign Ministry was identifying the number of Malaysians in Hubei and was in discussions with the Chinese government on the matter.

Dr Dzulkefly said the ministry had acquired an additional 25 thermal scanners and six of them would be placed at the Customs, Immigration and Quarantine complex in Johor Baru.

On reports over a shortage of face masks, he said the ministry would assess if there was a need to distribute masks to all homes.

"We do not have such plans for the time being. But I will not rule out the need to do so as part of our mitigating measures.

"This is a case of demand exceeding supply and it has resulted in an acute shortage of face masks. We have identified 42 local face mask manufacturers (to address the matter). Hopefully there should not be any problem." **Additional reporting by Teh Athira Yusof and Farah Solhi**

Page 1 pic: People wearing face masks in a train in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Face masks not necessary yet, says senior doctor

SUNGAI BULOH: People do not have to wear face masks as there had been no local transmissions of the 2019-nCoV among Malaysians so far, says a senior doctor.

"However, this may change over time if the virus spreads and there is human-to-human transmission," Sungai Buloh Hospital senior consultant physician (infectious disease) Dr Benedict Sim said.

"At the moment, donning a face mask is only necessary if you are visiting China, which is the epicentre of the outbreak," he said at the Health Ministry's 2019-nCoV briefing here yesterday.

He said if needed, people could use a three-ply surgical mask if they were worried about catching a cold or Influenza A.

Dr Sim, however, advised people against using the same surgical mask throughout the day as it would have captured moisture and needed to be changed every few hours.

He recommended against using one-ply masks as they were too thin and do not protect against germs.

N95 masks, used for protection against hazardous substances, were not necessary, he said.

"The 2019-nCoV infects via droplets and surgical masks protects against this.

"N95 masks are used when there are airborne viruses. The mask needs to fit our facial contours and be properly worn. There is also a specific way to remove this mask without contaminating the hands.

"So at this stage, we don't recommend the N95 mask."

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NATION

Consultant: Face masks not a must for now

By LOH FOON FONG
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PUTRAJAYA: It is not necessary to wear a mask for now since no human-to-human transmission of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) has occurred in Malaysia, said infectious disease consultant Dr Benedict Sim.

Dr Sim, who is from Hospital Sungai Buloh, said this was the reason why no official recommendation has been made for the population to use a mask each time they leave their homes.

"Masks are helpful when there are human-to-human transmissions but there is none in Malaysia currently.

"That advice may change over time, if the outbreak changes," he said in a media briefing by the Health Ministry here yesterday.

However, he said it was necessary to wear a mask when visiting China, where the epicentre of the outbreak is.

Dr Sim said that since the 2019-nCoV is spread mainly through droplets and contact, a suitable mask to be worn when needed is the three-layer surgical mask.

The mask must be worn properly so that it fits the facial contours snugly.

He also said there was no need for people to wear the (much pricier) N95 mask, and reminded the public that frequent hand washing was equally important in containing any disease transmission.

On the trend of symptoms currently, Dr Sim said that some of the young people who contracted the virus show little symptoms, if at all.

As of now, he said some have shown a very mild form of the disease or have no symptoms.

The death rate too has not shot up at the same rate as the incidence of the disease, he said.

Meanwhile, the Disease Control Division's public health specialist, Dr Azmi Abdul Rahim, said most of the people who are guided for temperature scanning at the land crossings between Malaysia and Singapore were Chinese nationals.

The effort was more targeted because there were a limited number of scanners, he said.

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 5
RUANGAN : NATION

Panel formed to bring M'sians home

Dzulkefly: Wisma Putra is ascertaining the number of citizens residing in Wuhan

PUTRAJAYA: A special committee on humanitarian assistance to bring home Malaysians from Hubei province, China, has been activated in the wake of the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) infection.

In announcing this yesterday, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the committee comprised the National Disaster Management Agency, the Foreign Ministry, the Health Ministry, the Malaysian Armed Forces, the National Security Council, and local carriers AirAsia and Malaysia Airlines.

"The committee aims to organise the safe return of Malaysians and their family members from Wuhan in Hubei, China.

"Wisma Putra is in the process of ascertaining the number of Malaysians residing there to be flown home," he told a news conference on the latest development on coronavirus here.

Dzulkefly said Wisma Putra has also continued discussions with its counterpart in China on matters related to the mission.

The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) said it supported the Federal Government's decision.

Its president Dr N. Ganabaskaran said that the move was "the right thing" to do.

"It is the right thing for a government to do for its citizens.

"Other countries are also making similar arrangements for their citizens to return," said Dr Ganabaskaran, adding that as Wuhan was under lockdown, it can be a traumatising experience for

those stranded there.

Bernama reported that the Malaysian Embassy in China is identifying the actual number of Malaysians living in the city of Wuhan and its surrounding areas in efforts to bring them home

Malaysian Ambassador to China Raja Datuk Nushirwan Zainal Abidin said this was to ensure that everyone is accounted for and would be brought home.

"We are still trying to get the names and the number of Malaysians in Wuhan and the surrounding cities who want to return home. But it is up to them should they choose to stay.

"So far we have located 96 Malaysians and 20 non-citizen spouses. Of the total, eight are students while the rest are in China to visit their families," he said when contacted by Bernama yesterday.

Raja Nushirwan said Malaysians who have not contacted the embassy are urged to do so as this would allow the evacuation procedures to run smoothly.

Asked if there is sufficient food for the Malaysians there, Raja Nushirwan said the embassy is also trying to send food supplies to homes of the Malaysian citizens.

"From what we have gathered there were concerns over inadequate food supply but the people there are still getting their stocks as the Chinese government has delivered food supplies to Wuhan."

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysia was prepared to evacuate and bring back Malaysians in Wuhan, as soon as permission is secured from China.

Dr Mahathir said for this purpose, the Malaysian government through the Foreign Ministry would soon initiate talks with the Chinese government.

Watch the video
thestartv.com

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 9
RUANGAN : NATION

All suspected cases in Sabah negative for virus

By KRISTY INUS and VENESA DEVI
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KOTA KINABALU: All 25 cases of suspected novel coronavirus infection involving China nationals in Sabah have tested negative, says the state Health Department.

State Health director Datuk Dr Christina Rundi said the China nationals, who came in as tourists via Kota Kinabalu, were referred to the department by their hotels or at entry points.

On a viral Facebook posting about a patient suspected of having the virus being treated in Tawau, Rundi said as of now, they are still investigating.

"Out of the 25 patients under investigation, only nine were admitted and 16 received outpatient treatment. But none came out positive (with the virus).

"So, we hope the public will refer to the department to clarify rumours," she told reporters after the launch of 'Sabah Healthline' WhatsApp hotline here yesterday.

Also present was state Health and People's Wellbeing Minister Datuk Frankie Poon.

On the 71-year-old China national who was confirmed to have the coronavirus upon landing in Tianjin, China, after returning from Sabah, Poon said the symptoms might only have developed after the man left the country as screenings in Kota Kinabalu did not detect anything.

The man was in Sabah from Jan 20-25.

"We previously had two levels of screenings but since there are no longer any flights from Wuhan into Sabah, we have maintained one level of screening for all international flights," said Poon, adding that the screenings had been successful so far.

Rundi said the department will continue to engage with more tour operators and hotels.

"They have been helpful by referring clients with symptoms to us," she said, adding that those who travelled to China recently could also refer themselves to their nearest clinic.

Meanwhile, industry sources said about 70% of tour bookings from China to Malaysia these coming months had been cancelled.

Malaysia Tourist Guides Council president Jimmy Leong said the cancellation was made following a travel ban imposed by the Chinese government on its citizen.

The cancellation, he said, would affect Malaysia's tourism industry as a majority of those visiting the country are from China.

Leong said only Chinese tourists who left their country before the travel ban was imposed are visiting Malaysia but precautionary steps are being taken at all checkpoints in the country to screen them.

He said local players in the tourism industry have been given briefings from the Health Ministry on how to handle the coronavirus issue.

Leong also said tour guides had been told to avoid crowded places and to advise tourists to wash their hands regularly.

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN :

Above and beyond WHO guidelines

Dzulkefly says criticism unfair as ministry is doing more than required to stop spread of coronavirus

BY **AMAR SHAH MOHSEN**
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PUTRAJAYA: The government is taking extra precautionary measures, in addition to recommendations and advice from the World Health Organisation (WHO), in its attempt to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said as such, it would be unfair for any quarter to blame the ministry for supposed lack of preventive measures to ensure the number of infections does not escalate.

"For your information, whatever recommended procedures WHO has issued, the Health Ministry has done more than that.

"I'm also very glad that industry players like airlines and hoteliers are also taking their own measures, such as screening and sanitising, to help prevent the spread of the virus," he told a press conference yesterday.

Dzulkefly was responding to claims that the measures taken by the ministry to contain the virus were ineffective after a Chinese national, who initially tested negative, was later confirmed to be carrying the virus while taking care of her two children who tested positive at the Sungai Buloh Hospital.

This could be the first human-to-human transmission case by way of contact here in Malaysia, while under the observation of Health Ministry personnel.

But Dzulkefly said there was every chance that the woman could have contracted the virus when she was still in Wuhan, China but only developed the symptoms when she was diagnosed.

"Our incubation period is 14 days ... the woman was confirmed positive about seven days after she was quarantined.

"If she had tested positive after the 14 days, then yes (it could mean there was local human-to-human transmission).

"But in this case, you can't say the measures we (ministry) have taken were ineffective in preventing the spread of the virus.

"It's not fair," he said.

To date, eight people have been confirmed positive for the virus in Malaysia.

Dzulkefly said the government has set up a special humanitarian aid mission committee to help bring home Malaysians who are in Wuhan, which has been locked down.

He said the committee will negotiate with its China counterpart to expedite the repatriation process.

Dzulkefly briefs the media at his ministry yesterday. – ***BERNAMAPIX***