

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Penularan coronavirus

# Tempoh inkubasi kekal 14 hari

Tambahan masa kepada 24 hari beri pelbagai implikasi kepada pesakit

Oleh Noor Atiqah Sulaiman  
bhnews@bh.com.my

**Putrajaya:** Kerajaan tidak bercadang memanjatkan tempoh inkubasi daripada 14 kepada 24 hari terhadap pesakit positif jangkitan novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) seperti yang diperolehi dalam data penyelidikan di China.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, berkata menurut pakar di negara ini, penambahan tempoh inkubasi itu akan memberi pelbagai implikasi kepada pesakit berkenaan.

"Mereka (pakar) mengatakan itu satu perkara yang sukar untuk diterima pada ketika ini. Pelbagai penyelidikan sedang dilakukan dan akan dikeluarkan, dibentangkan serta dihebahkan nanti.

"(Pendirian inkubasi) adalah sementara sehingga kami dapat

pengesahan dari pakar dan Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) (mengenai pengesahan penyelidikan terbabit)," katanya dalam sidang media selepas sidang video bersama Menteri Kesihatan Singapura, Gan Kim Yong.

Sebelum ini, media antarabangsa melaporkan data terbaru berdasarkan penyelidikan membabitkan lebih 1,000 pesakit 2019-nCoV mendapati tempoh inkubasi virus itu boleh mencecah 24 hari, bukannya 14 hari seperti yang dipercayai sebelum ini.

Kajian oleh sekurang-kurangnya 36 penyelidik dari hospital dan institusi perubatan di China itu, mendapati kurang separuh daripada mangsa terbabit menunjukkan simptom dijangkiti virus itu apabila pertama kali bertemu doktor.

Ketua Penyelidik, Dr Zhong Nanshan, yang juga pakar epi-



Dr Dzulkefly sebelum sidang video bersama Kim Yong mengenai situasi terkini jangkitan coronavirus di Putrajaya, semalam.

(Foto BERNAMA)

demologi China, yang bertanggungjawab menemui coronavirus Sindrom Pernafasan Akut Teruk (SARS) pada 2003, berkata penemuan terbaru itu membuktikan masih banyak yang belum diketahui mengenai 2019-nCoV.

Pesakit yang terbabit dalam penyelidikan itu merangkumi mereka yang mendapat rawatan di 552 hospital dalam 31 wilayah antara 1 hingga 29 Januari lalu, yang mana hanya 1.18 peratus ada hubungan langsung dengan hidupan liar disyaki menjadi punca virus itu.

Hampir satu pertiga daripada mereka pernah mengunjungi Wuhan dan 71.8 peratus ada hubungan dengan seseorang dari Wuhan yang menjadi punca wabak itu, sekali gus membuktikan jang-

kitan antara manusia kepada manusia.

Sementara itu, Dr Dzulkefly berkata, bilangan keseluruhan pesakit yang sembuh daripada jangkitan 2019-nCoV adalah lebih tinggi berbanding jumlah kematian direkodkan di peringkat global.

Beliau menjelaskan, berdasarkan data Sistem Maklumat Geografi, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia mendapati 3,496 daripada 40,555 kes positif virus itu telah sembuh, manakala hanya 910 kes kematian dicatat setakat kelmarin.

Katanya, jumlah pesakit yang sembuh itu menyaksikan antaranya 3,468 kes di China, 10 kes di Thailand, dua kes di Singapura manakala tiga kes di Malaysia.

"Perkara ini perlu dilihat se-

bagai satu perkembangan positif bukan sahaja kepada Malaysia, malah seluruh dunia.

"Ia satu berita baik bahawa jangkitan coronavirus tidak semestinya berakhir dengan kematian, kalau ada penyakit lain, kemungkinan kematian lebih besar," katanya kepada Bernama.

Untuk rekod, setakat 10 Februari, tiga kes pesakit coronavirus yang sembuh di Malaysia membabitkan warga China iaitu dua lelaki berusia 63 dan 40 tahun serta kanak-kanak perempuan berusia empat tahun.

Ditanya mengenai sama ada fenomena cuaca panas yang sedang melanda negara akan memburukkan penularan jangkitan virus itu, Dr Dzulkefly menjelaskan ia dijangka tidak memberi impak.

## Jawatankuasa dua negara tangani penularan

**Putrajaya:** Malaysia dan Singapura bersetuju menubuhkan Jawatankuasa Kerja Bersama bagi berkongsi maklumat dalam bidang kesihatan awam, perubahan dan penyelidikan untuk memastikan penularan novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) dapat ditangani secara berkesan.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, berkata jawatankuasa itu diterajui Timbalannya, Dr Lee Boon Chye bersama rakan sejawatnya dari Singapura.

Katanya, susulan penubuhan jawatankuasa itu, pegawai kanan dari kedua-dua negara mengadakan perbincangan dalam masa terdekat, bagi mengenalpasti terma rujukan bagi jawatankuasa berkenaan.

"Antara fokus kerjasama dua hala berkenaan termasuklah saringan dan pengurusan kes-kes teras sempadan antara kedua-dua negara serta penyeragaman indikasi bagi penggunaan ubat antiviral kepada pesakit yang disahkan positif 2019-nCoV," katanya.

## MATTA gesa segerakan pakej rangsangan ekonomi

**Kuala Lumpur:** Persatuan Ejen-ejen Pelancongan dan Pengembaraan Malaysia (MATTA) menggesa kerajaan segera melaksanakan pakej rangsangan ekonomi bagi membantu industri pelancongan yang kini sudah merasai impak penularan coronavirus.

Presidennya, Datuk Tan Kok Liang, berkata kesannya dapat dilihat dengan kehadiran pelancong di bandar-bandar utama seperti Pulau Pinang, Johor Bahru, Kuala Lumpur, Kuching dan Kota Kinabalu berkurangan dengan ketara.

"Saya difahamkan kerajaan akan mengkaji dan membuat keputusan, tetapi seperti saya katakan, jika anda berjalan di bandar utama-utama, anda akan dapat lihat kurangnya pelancong asing di sini.

"Jadi saya menggesa kerajaan supaya segera laksana pakej rangsangan ini. Tidak perlu kaji terlalu lama dan buat keputusan dengan segera supaya kami boleh memberi fokus terhadap tugas utama kami iaitu untuk mempromosikan Malaysia," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian pada sidang media mengumumkan pe-



Kok Liang pada sidang media mengumumkan pelaksanaan Pameran MATTA Fair Cuti-Cuti Malaysia, di Kuala Lumpur, semalam.

(Foto Rohanis Shukri/BH)

laksanaan Pameran MATTA Fair Cuti-Cuti Malaysia buat julung kali di pejabatnya di sini, semalam.

Pameran berkenaan akan diadakan pada 4 hingga 5 April ini bertempat di Pusat Konvensyen Kuala Lumpur dengan penyer-taan lebih 200 pempamer.

MATTA juga mengumumkan pemberian diskaun 40 peratus sewa kepada pempamer yang menyertai pameran berkenaan.

Persatuan itu turut mengumumkan penundaan Pameran MATTA yang sepatutnya berlangsung pada Mac ini kepada

1-3 Mei depan.

Dalam pada itu, Kok Liang juga mengesahkan dakwaan yang mengatakan lebih 95,000 tempahan hotel di seluruh negara telah dibatalkan setakat ini membabitkan anggaran kerugian RM40 juta.

"Ya ia (pembatalan tempahan) adalah benar. Kebanyakan pembatalan tempahan ini adalah dari pelancong China," katanya.

Dalam perkembangan lain beliau berkata, MATTA mencadangkan dua cadangan baharu terhadap kerajaan supaya dapat dimasukkan dalam pakej rangsangan ekonomi.

Katanya, ia adalah memberi potongan cukai berganda kepada syarikat yang menghantar pekerjaannya menjalani latihan atau program 'team building' di acara mesyuarat, insentif, persidangan, pameran (MICE) di dalam Malaysia.

Selain itu katanya, untuk individu, pihaknya mencadangkan pengecualian cukai hingga RM2,000 untuk pakej pelancongan domestik yang dibeli syarikat berdaftar dengan Kementerian Pelancongan, Seni dan Budaya.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : LOKAL

# 95,000 tempahan dibatal

Matta akui hotel di Malaysia kerugian RM40 juta akibat wabak coronavirus



SEORANG lelaki memakai suit perlindungan lengkap membeli barang keperluan di sebuah pasar raya di Wuhan, China.

## Kekal SOP kuarantin 14 hari



**Putrajaya:** Malaysia mengambil pendirian untuk mengekalkan prosedur operasi standard (SOP) tempoh 14 hari kuarantin bagi kes coronavirus baharu.

Berdasarkan penyelidikan membabitkan lebih 1,000 pesakit coronavirus di China mendapati tempoh inkubasi virus itu boleh mencecah 24 hari dan bukannya 14 hari seperti dipercayai sebelum ini.

Menteri Kesihatan Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad bagaimanapun berkata, kementerianya terbuka kepada pelbagai pendapat.

"Saya juga mendapat input pakar kami. Penetapan 24 hari tempoh inkubasi itu membawa implikasi yang pelbagai.

"Mereka mengatakan itu satu perkara yang sukar untuk diterima pada ketika ini.

"Pelbagai penyelidikan sedang dilakukan, akan dikeluarkan dan dibentangkan," katanya pada sidang media Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) berhubung situasi terkini jangkitan coronavirus baharu dan pengesanan kes baharu di Malaysia, di Putrajaya semalam.

Dr Dzulkefly menegaskan pada ketika ini, pihaknya mengambil sikap semuanya bersifat sementara sehingga ada pengesahan daripada pakar tempatan dan pihak Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO).

"Kita kena izinkan semua pihak menjalankan kegiatan penyelidikan dan tidak mengemukakan atau mengambil sikap yang agak terlalu tegas.

"Tetapi kita mesti terbuka mendengar semua pihak. Kita punya pandangan, pada hujungnya kami terpaksa mengambil pendirian sendiri," katanya.

## Jumlah pesakit sembuh lebih tinggi

**Putrajaya:** Bilangan keseluruhan pesakit sembuh daripada jangkitan coronavirus baharu lebih tinggi berbanding jumlah kematian direkodkan di peringkat global.

Menteri Kesihatan Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad menjelaskan perkara itu berdasarkan dapatan Sistem Maklumat Geografi.

Menurutnya, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia mendapati 3,496 daripada 40,555 kes positif virus itu sudah sembuh, manakala hanya 910 kes kematian dicatat setakat kelmarin.

Beliau berkata, jumlah pesakit sembuh itu menyaksikan antaranya 3,468 kes di China, 10 kes di Thailand, dua kes di Singapura manakala tiga kes di Malaysia.

"Perkara ini perlu dilihat sebagai satu perkembangan positif bukan sahaja kepada Malaysia, malah seluruh dunia.

"Ia satu berita baik bahawa jangkitan coronavirus tidak semestinya berakhir dengan kematian, kalau ada penyakit lain, kemungkinan kematian lebih besar," katanya semalam.

Untuk rekod, setakat 10 Februari lalu, tiga kes pesakit coronavirus sembuh di Malaysia membabitkan warganegara China iaitu dua lelaki berusia 40 dan 63 tahun serta kanak-kanak perempuan berusia empat tahun.

Ditanya mengenai sama ada fenomena cuaca panas yang sedang melanda negara akan memburukkan penularan jangkitan coronavirus, Dzulkefly menjelaskan ia dijangka tidak memberi impak.

Sebaliknya, beliau menjangka keadaan itu mengurangkan penularan kerana virus itu dilihat lebih aktif merebak dalam cuaca sejuk. "Macam di China, virus ini merebak ketika musim

sejuk dan kebanyakan virus membabitkan penyakit seperti radang paru-paru ini lebih suka (aktif) pada musim sejuk.

"Pada musim panas ini, kita jangka tak beri kesan kerana virus mati dalam suhu tinggi (apabila virus berada di luar badan atau di atas permukaan sesuatu objek)," katanya.



DR Dzulkefly

SEORANG anggota polis berkuatkuat perlindungan berkuatkuat di luar Hong Mei House, Ujong Kong, semalam. Empat daripada penghuni pangsapuri berkenaan didapati positif coronavirus.



DO NOT CROSS

**Putrajaya:** Laporan penuh berhubung impak coronavirus baharu terhadap sektor pekerjaan dijangka diterima akhir Februari ini.

Menteri Sumber Manusia M Kulasegaran berkata, kementerianya bekerjasama dengan Kementerian Pelancongan, Seni dan Budaya Malaysia, (MOTAC) bagi pengumpulan data itu.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 7

RUANGAN : ANCAMAN KORONAVIRUS DI CHINA



Dr Dzulkefly (tiga dari kiri) pada sidang media di Putrajaya semalam berhubung perkembangan terkini koronavirus.

## Kerajaan tidak bercadang lanjutkan tempoh inkubasi

**PUTRAJAYA** - Malaysia tidak bercadang untuk melanjutkan tempoh inkubasi koronavirus sehingga 24 hari.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad berkata, tiada keperluan untuk mengambil tindakan itu sehingga mendapat pengesahan daripada Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) dan penyelidikan tempatan.

“Kami terpaksa mengekalkan pendirian (untuk mengekalkan 14 hari sebagai tempoh inkubasi),” katanya.

Menurutnya, pelbagai penyelidikan sedang dilakukan dan datanya akan dibentangkan.

“Buat masa sekarang, kami ambil pendekatan tentatif atau sementara sehingga mendapat pengesahan.

“Inkubasi 24 hari akan menimbulkan pelbagai implikasi,” katanya pada sidang media perkembangan terkini koronavirus di kementeriannya di sini semalam.

Terdahulu, berita agensi melaporkan data terbaharu berdasarkan penyelidikan membabitkan lebih 1,000 pesakit koronavirus di China mendapati tempoh inkubasi virus itu boleh mencecah 24 hari bukannya 14 hari seperti yang dipercayai sebelum ini.

Kajian oleh sekurang-kurangnya 36 penyelidik dari hospital dan institusi perubatan di China itu mendapati kurang separuh daripada mangsa terabit menunjukkan simptom dijangkiti virus itu apabila kali pertama bertemu doktor.

Mengulas mengenai perkembangan terkini wabak itu di negara ini, beliau berkata, tiada kes baharu dilaporkan.

“Kes kekal 18 dan sebanyak 106 kontak rapat telah dikenal pasti,” katanya.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : NEWS/ NATION

NEWS / Nation



WEATHERING 2019-NCOV IMPACT

## STIMULUS PACKAGE TO SPUR DOMESTIC SPENDING

EAC formulating measures to help industries cope, says Azmin

NOR AIN MOHAMED RADHI  
PUTRAJAYA  
news@nst.com.my

**H**ELPING industries tackle cash flow issues and introducing new initiatives to spur domestic spending are among the aspects that will feature in the government's upcoming eco-

nomie stimulus package to tackle the economic impact of the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Economic Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Azmin Ali said the government, via the Economic Action Council (EAC), which met in Putrajaya yesterday, was formulating the required measures.

He said the outbreak had an impact on the tourism, retail and airline industries.

"To resolve this, the government has taken steps to devise an economic stimulus package to weather the economic impact of the outbreak.

"Among the aspects given focus is helping industries tackle operational cash flow and rolling

out new initiatives to encourage domestic spending," he said in a statement.

He said domestic tourism could also generate income as it could see greater demand.

"The Finance Ministry is holding discussions with the ministries, agencies and industries involved to seek their input for the stimulus package."

He said the EAC also discussed possible developments in the domestic capital market to maintain inclusive growth.

The EAC, said Azmin, had also agreed that existing forums should be fine-tuned more productively, including those with interest, such as capital market

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 3

RUANGAN : NEWS/ NATION



Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (fifth from left) at a press conference on the latest update on the novel coronavirus outbreak in Putrajaya yesterday. With him are his deputy, Dr Lee Boon Chye (fourth from left), Health Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Dr Chen Chaw Min (third from left) and Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah (third from right). BERNAMA PIC

authorities, industry players and the central bank.

He said in line with the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 and in accordance with the principles of development, the EAC also discussed holistic ideas on developing and improving the socio-economic status of the Orang Asli.

He said the issues discussed included ownership and development of "tanah adat" (ancestral land), access to healthcare, education and skills training, and basic infrastructure, as well as the economy.

"The EAC also agreed that a more specific plan be implemented soon to tackle the issues, including getting cooperation from the state governments."

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had previously said the government would roll out an economic stimulus package to help mitigate the economic impact of the outbreak.

Among the worst-hit industries was the tourism sector, which had been anticipating a bumper

year in view of the Visit Malaysia 2020 campaign.

The Malaysian Association of Hotels, on Monday, said 95,972 bookings were cancelled following the outbreak, amounting to RM40 million in losses of revenue up to Feb 9.

During the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in 2003, a similar package was implemented, valued at RM7.3 billion.

Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng said the stimulus package would be unveiled at the latest by early next month.

The announcement, he said, would be made by Dr Mahathir.

"It will be announced either by the end of this month or latest in the first week of March. We are getting input from everyone for this stimulus package," he said after the launch of mySalam programme expansion yesterday.

Lim said a meeting was held on Monday with industry players and more sessions would be held subsequently.

## 'No plans to extend quarantine period'

**PUTRAJAYA:** Malaysia has no plans to extend the quarantine period of 14 days for cases involving the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said.

He said that the 14-day quarantine period would be maintained, and that any decision would be made accordingly for the country and based on advice from the World Health Organisation (WHO).

He was asked if the quarantine period would be extended as a study in China involving 1,000 patients infected with 2019-nCoV allegedly found that the virus was able to survive for as long as 24 days.

He said experts in Malaysia believed that an extended quarantine period would have various implications on the patient.

"They (experts) believe that it is something that is difficult to accept at the moment.

"We must allow all kinds of researches to be presented, published and so on, but we must take a stand and have our own opinion.

"(Our position on the quarantine period) is temporary until we get confirmation from the WHO (on the veracity of the research findings)," he said at a press conference at the Health Ministry yesterday after a teleconference session with Singapore Health Minister Gan Kim Yong.

Dr Dzulkefly also dismissed claims of a shortage of anti-viral drugs, saying that Malaysia and Singapore faced no such problems.

He was also asked if the min-

istry would place those who have recovered from 2019-nCoV infection on a watch list to ensure there were no relapse cases.

The question was answered by Sungai Buloh Hospital infectious diseases consultant Dr Suresh Kumar, who said foreign patients would be sent home while the ministry would continue monitoring local patients who had recovered.

He said while the ministry had the records of the recovered patients and would continue to monitor any new development, there had yet to be any relapse case from China.

Dr Dzulkefly said Malaysia and Singapore would form a joint working committee as part of the steps to address the outbreak in addition to the current collaboration between the two countries.

Dr Dzulkefly said the main objective of the committee, which would be led by the countries' deputy health ministers, was to strengthen mutually agreed cross-border efforts.

"Senior officials from Singapore and Malaysia will cooperate and continue the discussion at the earliest time to identify the terms of reference for the joint working committee," he said.

"The main focus of the committee is to share information in the public health sector and medicine, and to research the spread of the coronavirus, which we hope to address effectively.

"Uniformed indication on the anti-viral used on patients who tested positive for the coronavirus will also be among the focus of the committee."

Dr Dzulkefly said the focus would include identifying contact persons from both countries for better communication to manage any case involving 2019-nCoV and the contact-tracing processes.

He also indicated that one of the terms would include a travel advisory between Singapore and Malaysia.

He said up to yesterday, no new cases were recorded in Malaysia.

The number of positive cases remained at 18, while contact tracing was ongoing to identify close contacts of the cases.

"About 106 close contacts were identified and the total will increase until the contact-tracing process has been completed," said Dr Dzulkefly.

"Sixty of the close contacts are Malaysians and 46 are Chinese nationals. All those found to be close contacts have given their samples and have been placed under the observation-and-monitoring rule."

From the 18 cases, he said, eight were classified as patient-under-investigation, another eight were identified from close contacts and two were among Malaysians who were recently evacuated from China.

"Of the cases, 12 are Chinese nationals and six are Malaysians. Out of the 12 cases involving Chinese nationals, three have been discharged after undergoing detection tests twice and tested negative both times.

"The ministry will continue to monitor the development of the disease based on information given by the WHO."

## Minister: Coronavirus recovery rate high

**PUTRAJAYA:** The recovery rate for patients infected by the novel coronavirus is high, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

He said the Health Ministry's Geographical Information System found that 3,496 out of 40,555, or 8.6 per cent, of the cases tested positive for the virus had recovered, while only 910 deaths were recorded up to Monday.

With the mortality rate standing at 2.2 per cent, the recovery rate was four times higher, he said.

For comparison, the mortality rate during the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003 was 9.6 per cent.

The SARS outbreak, which

like the novel coronavirus also originated in China, infected 8,098 people and claimed 774 lives worldwide.

Out of the total number of coronavirus patients who recovered, the bulk were in China, numbering 3,468 cases, 10 in Thailand, two in Singapore, three in Malaysia and the rest in other countries.

"This should be seen as a positive development not only for Malaysia, but for the whole world. It's good news that the coronavirus is not a death-sentence virus," the minister said in an interview at his office here yesterday.

The three coronavirus patients who had recovered in Malaysia up to yesterday were all Chinese nationals, namely

two men aged 63 and 40 respectively, and a 4-year-old girl.

On whether the country's hot weather could increase the spread of the infection, Dr Dzulkefly said it was unlikely to have any impact.

Instead, he expected the infection rate to slow down, as the virus was seen to be more active in cold weather.

"Like in China, the virus spreads in winter and most viruses with pneumonia-like diseases are more active in winter.

"In hot weather, we expect not much of an effect because the virus is killed at high temperatures (when the virus is outside the body or on the surface of an object)." Bernama

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : NATION

Reports by JOSEPH KAOS Jr, K. KASTURI DEWI and KRISTY INUS

# 'Infection recovery rate is high'

## The coronavirus is not a death sentence virus, says Dzulkefly

**PUTRAJAYA:** There's a piece of good news related to the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak – the recovery rate for patients infected by the disease is high, says Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

He said the ministry's Geographical Information System found that 3,496 out of 40,555 or 8.6% of the cases who tested positive for the virus had recovered, while only 910 deaths were recorded as of Monday. As at 6pm yesterday, a foreign news report quoted Chinese government officials as saying that the nationwide number of deaths has risen to 1,016.

He said with the mortality rate standing at 2.2%, the recovery rate was four times higher.

For comparison, the mortality rate during the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak in 2003 was 9.6%. The SARS epidemic, which like the novel coronavirus also originated in China, caused 8,098 people to be sick and claimed 774 lives worldwide.

Out of the total number of coronavirus patients who recovered, the bulk were in China, numbering 3,468 cases, 10 in Thailand, two in Singapore, three in Malaysia and the rest in other countries.

"This should be seen as a positive development, not only for Malaysia, but for the whole world.

"It's good news that the coronavirus is not a death sentence virus," Dzulkefly said in an interview with Bernama.

The three coronavirus patients who had recovered in Malaysia as



of Sunday are all Chinese nationals, namely two men aged 63 and 40 respectively, and a four-year-old girl.

Asked whether the country's hot weather could increase the spread of the infection, Dzulkefly said it was unlikely to have any impact.

Instead, he expected the infection rate to slow down, as the virus was deemed to be more active in cold weather.

"Like in China, the virus spreads in winter and most viruses with pneumonia-like diseases are more active in winter.

"In hot weather, we expect not much of an effect because the virus is killed at high temperatures (when the virus is outside the body or on the surface of an object)," he said.

On a related matter, Dzulkefly said Malaysia and Singapore will discuss whether there is a need to impose a travel advisory between the two countries in light of the novel coronavirus situation.

This will be one of the terms of references in a joint working committee that will be headed by the Deputy Health Ministers of Malaysia and Singapore, he added.

"Travel advisory is one of the



**Colourful display:** The Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force's Bayi Aerobatic Team flying J-10 fighter jets as they perform an aerial display during the Singapore Airshow in Singapore. — AFP

things we want to discuss in detail to address the current situation, particularly in Singapore where they have changed its status alert to orange.

"This will be among the terms of references in the committee that we have agreed to establish," he added.

Earlier, Dzulkefly had a conference call with his Singapore counterpart Gan Kim Yong, which was also attended by 22 officials from both sides.

Singapore's Health Ministry raised its response to the crisis to 'Code

Malaysia and Singapore each day. "All the more reason why we need to strengthen our cooperation in managing the situation."

He said there were no new positive cases in Malaysia, keeping the tally at 18.

Meanwhile, Malaysians in Singapore are urged to follow the guidelines issued by the island republic to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, says Malaysian High Commissioner to Singapore Datuk Zainol Rahim Zainuddin.

He also advised Malaysians to take care of their health, especially with the Code Orange alert.

"Take care of your health. If you are unwell, see a doctor immediately," he was reported as saying when met on the sidelines of the Singapore Airshow 2020 yesterday.

About 300,000 Malaysians enter Singapore daily.

On Monday, Singapore's Ministry of Health confirmed two more cases of novel coronavirus, bringing the total number of infections to 45.

The High Commission of Malaysia in Singapore urged Malaysians working or residing in the republic to register with the commission via [https://www.kln.gov.my/web/sgp\\_singapore/malaysian\\_reg](https://www.kln.gov.my/web/sgp_singapore/malaysian_reg).

"This will enable us to contact you or your family in the event of any emergency," it said on its official Facebook page.

Watch the video  
[thestartv.com](http://thestartv.com)



AKHBAR : THE SUN

MUKA SURAT : 3

RUANGAN : NEWS WITHOUT BORDERS

## 'Nobody could see me'

"Although there was air-conditioning, there was no remote for me to adjust the temperature. I felt hot and there wasn't a fan.

"Nobody could see me except the medical workers in Hazmat suits, who came to take my temperature and deliver my meals."

Her only communication with the outside world was the intercom and her mobile phone.

"All the questions that the staff there asked on my condition were done through the intercom. I even received phone calls from Health Ministry personnel asking about my China trip," she said.

On top of being confined, all the items she had with her were confiscated, except her mobile phone. The items were returned to her after she was released.

Syadila said there was nothing she could do but eat and sleep, other than playing with her phone.

"After some time, I just laid down on the hospital bed and stared at the ceiling while waiting for the test results."

While Syadila was in the isolation ward, her family was house-quarantined for two days.

Her mother had gone to China with her. After her family was freed from house-quarantine, they visited her.

When she found out that she tested negative for the virus, it felt like a huge weight lifted off her chest.

"It was a tearful moment for my family as they announced the test results."

"I was allowed to go home the next day. The doctor said I was still under their watch and had to be quarantined at home for a few days."

Her condition will still be monitored by the Health Ministry until Thursday.

From front page

# Tourism players seek minimum wage suspension

Temporary waiver sought to cushion impact of coronavirus on the industry

BY AMAR SHAH MOHSEN AND IAN MCINTYRE  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** Tourism industry players are seeking leeway from the government to temporarily exempt them from paying their workers the mandatory minimum monthly wage.

Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Mohamadaddin Ketapi said this is one of several recommendations made by them to cushion the impact of the global coronavirus outbreak on the industry.

He said the players had claimed there has

been a drop in their revenue in recent weeks due to declining tourism activity following the Wuhan flu outbreak and this was expressed to him in a series of meetings and discussions held recently.

In a statement issued in Penang, the Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) said from late January until last Sunday, a total of 95,972 room bookings had been cancelled, resulting in the loss of RM40 million in potential earnings.

Currently, the minimum monthly wage for major towns under 56 city and municipal councils has been set at RM1,200, while the minimum salary for the rest of the country

remains at RM1,100.

"They want the implementation of the minimum wage in the tourism industry to be temporarily suspended due to decline in revenue," Mohamadaddin said in a statement yesterday.

Other than this, he said the industry players want the government to convert their electricity tariff from commercial to industrial charges.

MAH chief executive officer Yap Lip Seng proposed that certain mandatory contributions by those involved in the tourism sector be temporarily suspended as part of a recovery plan.

He said a reduction in tourism tax and an exemption from the service tax for Malaysians could help to boost domestic tourism.

"These measures can help to alleviate cash flow problems experienced by hoteliers resulting from the sudden loss of revenue."



Dzulkefly speaking on the virus situation in the country at the Health Ministry in Putrajaya yesterday. - BERNAMAPIX

## MS'SIANS URGED TO FOLLOW GUIDELINES

**SINGAPORE:** Malaysians in Singapore are urged to follow the guidelines issued by the government of the island republic to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Malaysian High Commissioner to Singapore, Datuk Zainol Rahim Zainuddin advised Malaysians to continue to take care of their health, especially as Singapore had raised the Disease Outbreak Response System Condition (Dorscon) alert level to "Orange". About 300,000 Malaysians enter Singapore daily. - Bernama

## 5,000 FERRY PASSENGERS SCREENED

**PONTIAN:** A total of 5,000 passengers who entered the state through the Kukup International Ferry Terminal on Monday, were put through health screening. None were reported to record high body temperature. Johor Public Works, Transport and Infrastructure Committee chairman Mohd Solihan Badri said screening was carried out by personnel from the Pontian District Health Department from Jan 29. - Bernama

## Recovery rate high, says Health minister

**PUTRAJAYA:** The recovery rate for patients infected by the 2019 novel coronavirus is high, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

He said the ministry's Geographical Information System found that 3,496 out of 40,555 or 8.6% of the cases tested positive for the virus had recovered, while only 910 deaths were recorded as of Feb 10.

With the mortality rate standing at 2.2%, the recovery rate was four times higher, he pointed out.

For comparison, the mortality rate during the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak in 2003 was 9.6%. The

SARS epidemic, which like the novel coronavirus also originated in China, caused 8,098 people to be infected and claimed 774 lives worldwide.

Of the total number of coronavirus patients who recovered, the bulk was in China, numbering 3,468 cases, 10 in Thailand, two in Singapore, three in Malaysia and the rest in other countries.

"This should be seen as positive, not only for Malaysia, but for the whole world."

"It's good news that the coronavirus is not a death-sentence virus," the minister said yesterday.

The three coronavirus patients who had

recovered in Malaysia (as of Monday) are all Chinese nationals - two men aged 40 and 63, and a four-year-old girl.

Dzulkefly added it was unlikely Malaysia's hot weather could increase the spread of the virus.

Instead, he expects the infection rate to dip as the virus is seen to be more active in cold weather. "Most viruses with pneumonia-like diseases are more active in winter."

"In hot weather, we expect not much of an effect because the coronavirus is killed at high temperatures (when the virus is outside the body or on the surface of an object)."

- Bernama

## 'Back from China' pupil causes the jitters at primary school

BY KONG SEE HOH  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

The parents of pupils of a primary school in South Seberang Perai district are worried to death because a "back from China" pupil returned to the school recently after only seven days of self-quarantine.

Some of them have complained to Deputy Education Minister Teo Nie Ching that the school's headmaster did not impose the mandatory 14-day quarantine as

ordered by the Education Ministry because he did not receive the ministry's official directive.

According to a report in *Nanyang Siang Pau* yesterday, a parent who wished to be identified only by her surname, Lee, has appealed to Teo to ensure that the ministry sends out a circular to all schools regarding the mandatory 14-day self-quarantine for students who visited China recently.

Lee said some parents told the deputy education minister on WhatsApp that the action of the headmaster had given them the jitters and that a few were so worried that they cried.



According to the report, the pupil returned to Malaysia on Jan 27 but went back to school on Feb 4 after quarantining himself at home for just a week.

Lee said although some teachers

had advised the pupil to stay away for 14 days, he went back to school for two days due to the headmaster's indecision.

The pupil's parents eventually kept him at home at the request of other parents.

Bukit Tambun assemblyman Goh Choon Aik, who received many parents' plea for help, said he contacted Teo and was told that the ministry had issued a directive on Jan 30 requiring students and teachers returning from China to

undergo a 14-day self-quarantine at home before going back to school.

Goh said he later met the headmaster over the matter but the latter told him he did not receive any official notification from the ministry.

Meanwhile, *Sin Chew Daily* reported yesterday that many parents of a primary school in Banting had kept their children at home following reports that a man from Banting was the country's 18th confirmed novel coronavirus case.