

SPEECH BY
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Tonight, I stand before you once again, to update you on the current situation regarding the COVID-19 pandemic that has caused great distress not just in Malaysia, but also throughout the world. To date, COVID-19 has spread over 135 countries. There have been 162,711 confirmed COVID-19 cases globally. From that number, 6443 deaths have been recorded.

In Malaysia, there was a sharp rise in the number of cases :190 cases recorded yesterday and an additional 125 cases today. The total number of cases now stand at 553 cases. From that number, 511 are being treated, whereas 42 have fully recovered.

The Government takes this current trend very seriously, especially the rise of the second wave of new infections. Our priority now is to prevent the further spread of this virus within the population. The current scenario requires drastic measures to be taken to resolve the situation as soon as possible.

To that end, the Government has decided to implement a nationwide Restriction of Movement Order beginning 18th of March until 31st of March. This Order is enforced under the Control and Prevention of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 and the Police Act 1967, and encompasses the following:

1. Complete restriction of movement and assembly nationwide, including religious activities, sports, social and cultural events. To enforce this restriction, all houses of worship and business premises are to be closed, except supermarkets, public markets, sundry shops and convenience stores selling essential goods.

Specifically, for Muslims, the suspension of all religious activities in mosques and Suraus, including the Friday prayers, is in line with decision of the Special Muzakarah Committee that convened on the 15th of March 2020.

2. A complete travel restriction for all Malaysians going overseas. For Malaysians returning home, they are required to undergo health checks and voluntary self-quarantine for a period of 14 days.
3. A complete restriction of foreign visitors and tourists into Malaysia.
4. Closure of all kindergartens, public and private schools, including day schools and residential schools, international schools, Tahfiz centers and all other institutions of learning in primary, secondary and pre-university levels.
5. Closure of all public and private institutions of higher learning nationwide, including skills training institutes.
6. Closure of all government and private premises except those involved in essential services (Water, electricity, energy, telecommunications, post, transportation, irrigation, oil, gas fuel, lubricants, broadcasting, finance, banking, health, pharmacy, fire prevention, prisons, ports, airports, security, defense, cleaning, food supply & retail)

I am aware that some of you may find these measures to be extremely cumbersome as you go about your daily lives. However, these measures are necessary in combating the virus, which may still threaten the lives of our people.

We have unfortunately witnessed a sharp rise in the number of cases affecting other countries in a very short time. Naturally we do not wish to see such similar developments take place in our country.

As the situation continues to worsen, we can wait no longer. Drastic measures must be taken immediately to check the spread of this virus by way of restricting public movement. This is the only way to prevent more people from being infected by this life-threatening virus.

I hope all of you can be patient as we go through this enormous challenge. Please do not panic, do not be alarmed and always remain calm. I believe that with these measures undertaken by the government, we will be able to stop the spread of this virus expeditiously.

We have seen several other countries such as China taking similar drastic measures and they have seen remarkable reduction in the number of new infections of COVID-19.

I would also like to give my assurance that the supply of food, daily necessities, and health products such as face masks are fully adequate. I have directed the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) to continuously monitor the supply situation regarding the items I mentioned, for the duration of this Order.

I ask all of you, to adhere to this Restriction of Movement Order. Indeed, it is our collective responsibility to do so, as a citizen who cares for the wellbeing of our families, our communities, and our nation.

I would also like to announce that a special session of the National Security Council will be convened daily to monitor the COVID-19 situation. I will be chairing this session and will be updating all of you, my fellow Malaysians, from time to time.

Should any of you have any questions regarding this Restriction of Movement Order, you may contact the National Operation Management Center at their hotline 03-8888 2010 beginning 12 noon tomorrow.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey my heartfelt thanks to all our front liners, health workers, civil servants and all parties who are working non-stop, day and night to help us resolve this COVID-19 problem.

I pray that all of us will continue to have strength and courage in doing our duty to the country, in ensuring the safety and the wellbeing of our people.

Finally, I pray that we will always be under the protection of Allah S.W.T