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# COVID-19

## // HOW IT UNFOLDED

It has been a challenging year for Malaysians from all walks of life who have joined hands in their fight against Covid-19. While our frontliners are being tested both mentally and physically, others are forced to adapt to new changes at home, work and school. Covid-19 is far from over, but our patience and perseverance continue. Here's a recap of the year.

### January

- JAN 23** • Health Ministry (MoH), through its Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre (CPRC), receives a report of two cases in Sabah and one case in Selangor suspected to be related to the 2019 novel coronavirus, which was initially referred to as 2019-nCoV.
- JAN 24** • Eight Chinese nationals who arrived in Johor Baru from Singapore on Jan 23 are placed under quarantine.
- JAN 25** • Then health minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad confirms the first 2019-nCoV cases in Malaysia involving four Chinese nationals, who entered Malaysia via Johor from Singapore on Jan 23.
- MoH advises against travel to China if there is no necessity.
- JAN 27** • MoH identifies 26 hospitals nationwide to handle 2019-nCoV cases that require further examination and treatment.
- Government temporarily suspends all immigration facilities to Chinese citizens coming from Wuhan and Hubei, China.
- JAN 29** • Another three 2019-nCoV cases confirmed, bringing total to seven.
- Then prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad says Malaysia will bring back its citizens from Wuhan.
- JAN 30** • Special humanitarian mission to repatriate Malaysians from Hubei is activated. A committee, coordinated by the National Disaster Management Agency, with the help of the foreign and health ministries, armed forces and National Security Council, is set up.
- Sabah government temporarily suspends all scheduled and chartered flights from China.
- JAN 31** • World Health Organisation (WHO) declares the coronavirus outbreak a global health emergency.

### February

- FEB 1** • Chinese nationals and foreigners who had visited China in the last 14 days are barred from entering Sarawak.
- Malaysian embassy in Beijing sends team to Wuhan to coordinate return of 120 Malaysians in Hubei province.
- FEB 4** • 107 Malaysians and their families who were previously stranded in Wuhan return to Malaysia. They are quarantined at the Higher Education Leadership Academy (AKEPT) in Bandar Enstek, Nilai, Negri Sembilan.
- 41-year-old Malaysian from Selangor, who had attended a meeting of international delegates in Singapore from Jan 16 to 23, becomes first Malaysian to test positive for 2019-nCoV.
- Malaysia's first 2019-nCoV patient recovers and is allowed to return home. The 4-year-old girl from China had sought treatment at Sultanah Maliha Hospital, Langkawi, since Jan 26.
- FEB 5** • Two Malaysians, who were part of the evacuated group from Wuhan, test positive for the virus.
- FEB 7** • Malaysia reports the first local 2019-nCoV infection involving a 40-year-old Malaysian woman with no history of visiting China.
- FEB 9** • Second local infection involving a 65-year-old woman, who is the mother-in-law of the first local case, tests positive for the virus.
- Malaysia extends arrival bans to include travellers from the Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces in China.
- FEB 10** • Sarawak government imposes 14-day self-quarantine for those returning from Singapore after the republic upgraded its coronavirus status to an orange alert.
- FEB 11** • Malaysia and Singapore agree to form joint committee to handle the outbreak.
- FEB 12** • MoH receives additional 26 thermal scanners to be placed at all entry points in Malaysia. There are now 80 thermal scanners at entry points.
- WHO announces that the official name of 2019-nCoV will be Covid-19.
- FEB 17** • First Malaysian who tested positive for Covid-19 recovers and is discharged from Sungai Buloh Hospital.
- FEB 27** • Then interim prime minister Dr Mahathir announces the 2020 Economic Stimulus Package in a bid to boost the economy following the effects of the outbreak.

### March

- MARCH 6** • Malaysia issues travel advisory for those heading to Lombardy, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna in Italy; Hokkaido in Japan; and Teheran, Qom and Gilan in Iran, following a surge in Covid-19 cases.
- MARCH 11** • A 60-year-old Malaysian man, who attended a tabligh gathering at a mosque in Sri Petaling, Selangor between Feb 28 and March 1, tests positive for Covid-19. He was among 5,000 participants at the gathering.
- Malaysia bans travellers from Italy, Iran and South Korea from March 13.
- MARCH 12** • WHO declares Covid-19 as a pandemic.
- Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said Malaysia confirmed its first sporadic case of Covid-19 on March 11, signalling the first time the virus was detected in an isolated and random manner in the community.
- MARCH 16** • Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin announces the implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO) nationwide for 14 days from March 18 to 31. The MCO is imposed under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 and Police Act 1967.
- Among other things, the MCO covers bans on overseas travel, mass gatherings, temporary closures of houses of worship, schools, educational institutes, and most business premises except for those related to essential services.
- Essential services entail activities related to water, electricity, energy, telecommunications, post, transportation, irrigation, oil, gas, fuel and lubricants, broadcasting, finances, banking, health, pharmacies, fire and rescue, prisons, ports, airports, security, defence, public cleansing, retail and food supply.
- MARCH 17** • Malaysia reports its first two deaths from Covid-19, involving a 60-year-old pastor from Kuching and a 34-year-old man in Johor who had attended the tabligh gathering.
- MARCH 18** • MCO begins.



- MARCH 20** • The third Covid-19 death is reported, involving a 58-year-old man from the tabligh cluster.
- MARCH 25** • Muhyiddin announces a 14-day extension of the MCO until April 14.
- MARCH 26** • Seven Istana Negara staff test positive for Covid-19. Yang DiPertuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tunku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah, however, test negative for the virus but undergo the 14-day self-quarantine.
- MARCH 27** • Muhyiddin announces RM250 billion Prihatin Rakyat Economic Stimulus Package (Prihatin).
- Kampung Datuk Ibrahim Majid and Bandar Baharu Datuk Ibrahim Majid in Simpang Renggam, Johor are the first areas in the country to be placed under the Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO).
- MARCH 28** • WHO announces that Malaysia was chosen as one of the countries that will conduct joint research on the Remdesivir drug that is used to treat the Covid-19 infection.
- MARCH 29** • Government says Hulu Langat, Selangor will be placed under EMCO from March 30 to April 13.
- MARCH 30** • Menara City One in Kuala Lumpur is placed under EMCO until April 13. The move involves 3,200 residents in 502 residential units and 49 shops.
- MARCH 31** • Malaysians returning from abroad will undergo a 14-day quarantine at designated centres.

### April

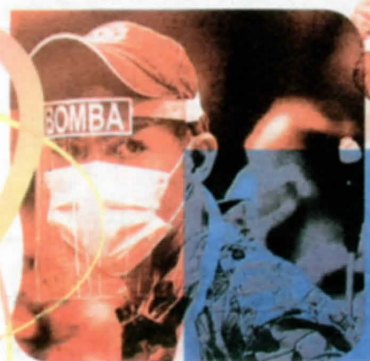
- APRIL 7** • Selangor Mansion and Malayan Mansion flats in Jalan Masjid India, Kuala Lumpur, are placed under EMCO.
- APRIL 10** • Muhyiddin announces the third phase of MCO from April 15 to 28.
- APRIL 14** • The Masjid India area is placed under EMCO until April 28.
- APRIL 15** • Senior Education Minister Dr Mohd Radzi Jidin announces cancellation of Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR) and Form Three Assessment (PT3). Ministry also postpones this year's Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) and Sijil Vokasional Malaysia (SYM) examinations for Form Five students, Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM) and Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia (STAM).
- APRIL 16** • The government prohibits Ramadan bazaars, including e-bazaar, ahead of fasting month which starts on April 24.
- APRIL 21** • The Covid-19 Quarantine and Low Risk Treatment Centre (PKRC) is set up at the Malaysia Agro Exposition Park (MAEPS) in Serdang. First patient is admitted at the facility today.
- APRIL 23** • Muhyiddin announces the fourth phase of the MCO from April 29 to May 12.

### May

- MAY 1** • Muhyiddin announces the implementation of the Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) from May 4 to 12, replacing the ongoing fourth phase of MCO. Among other things, the CMCO emphasises the reopening of many economic sectors. However, movement restrictions continue as an interstate travel ban is upheld.
- MAY 11** • Muhyiddin announces another extension of the CMCO from May 13 to June 9.
- MAY 13** • Senior Minister (Security Cluster) Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob says Hari Raya Aidilfitri visits on May 24 will be limited to only the first day of the celebration. He says visits are limited to close family members of not more than 20 people. The same rule applies for the Kaamatan (May 30) and Gawai (June 1) celebrations.







## June

- JUNE 7** • Muhyiddin announces the implementation of the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO), replacing the CMCO, from June 10 to Aug 31. With the RMCO, the interstate travel ban was lifted and domestic tourism is encouraged to revive the economy.
- JUNE 10** • RMCO begins.
- Education Minister Dr Radzi announces that students slated to undergo SPM, SVM, STPM, STAM and the equivalent international school examinations this year will return to school on June 24.
- JUNE 15** • The government announces that preschools and kindergartens will reopen on July 1.
- JUNE 16** • The government says all mosques and surau in the Federal Territories (Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya and Labuan) except those in red zones can reopen for Friday and congregational prayers.
- JUNE 24** • Schools reopen for 500,444 major exam-bound students at 2,440 schools nationwide.
- JUNE 29** • Authorities announce that theme parks, including water parks, shall reopen starting July 1.

## July

- JULY 1** • The Education Ministry says students not bound by major exams in all primary and secondary schools can return to school in phases starting July 15.
- Preschools, kindergartens and theme parks reopen.
- JULY 8** • The Sri Petaling tabligh cluster, which was the most deadly cluster at this point, officially ends. The cluster recorded 34 deaths, 3,375 people infected and 42,023 screened. These patients included attendees, their family members, and others who were in close contact with them. The cluster led to 17 sub-clusters in seven states.
- JULY 10** • Last patient is discharged from the MAEPS PKRC.
- JULY 15** • Students in Form One to Form Four and Year Five to Year Six pupils resume classes.
- MAEPS PKRC officially ends operations, after having successfully treated 1,362 patients, a majority of whom were foreigners (86 per cent) and 14 per cent Malaysians.
- JULY 22** • Pupils in Year One to Year Four resume classes.



## August

- AUG 2** • Four areas in Kedah; the Ah, Hosba and Binjal subdistricts in Kubang Pasu and Kampong Ulu in Padang Sana, Padang Terap, are placed under Targeted EMCO or TEMCO when cases under the Sivagangga cluster surface. Five schools are ordered to close.
- AUG 3** • Government announces that the MySejahtera app is compulsory for all businesses, except rural areas where Internet connection is unstable.
- AUG 7** • The Selangor Islamic Religious Department orders closure of a surau and religious school in Section 23, Shah Alam after members of the surau's congregation were found to be close contacts of Sivagangga cluster patients.
- The Perlis Islamic Religious and Malay Customs Council (MAIPs) orders the closure of 12 mosques in Sanglang state constituency and neighbouring areas.
- AUG 8** • TEMCO is imposed in Kampung Kuala Sanglang and Kampung Tanah Timbul, Perlis for 28 days. The move involves 872 people in 191 houses.
- AUG 15** • The Institute of Medical Research detects the highly infectious D614G-type mutation of Covid-19 in samples taken from three cases linked to the Sivagangga cluster, and one from the Ulu Tiram cluster.
- AUG 16** • Penang authorities impose stricter standard operating procedures (SOP), including closure of night markets, dine-in at restaurants and closure of parks, after a surge of cases are traced to a Covid-19 case in Teluk Kumbar.
- 59 medical workers at a private hospital in Penang are quarantined after being in contact with a Covid-19 patient, who is a close contact of Kedah's Tawar cluster index case.
- AUG 25** • The Health Ministry says children aged 12 and under can opt to wear only face shields when they are in school.
- AUG 27** • The government says an administrative EMCO will be imposed in three zones in Amanjaya, Kedah starting Aug 28 following detection of nine Covid-19 cases linked to the Tawar cluster.
- AUG 28** • The government announces the extension of the RMCO until Dec 31.

## September

- SEPT 3** • The government says citizens from countries with more than 150,000 Covid-19 cases will be banned from entering the country, except for emergency or bilateral-related cases.
- SEPT 10** • The government says Administrative EMCO in 28 areas in the Kota Setar district, Kedah will be imposed from Sept 11 to 25 after a spike in cases from the Sungai and Tawar clusters.

- SEPT 15** • Ismail Sabri says Malaysians students will now be allowed to travel abroad for their studies.

- SEPT 19** • Visitors entering Sarawak from Sabah are required to take the Covid-19 PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test three days before departure.

- SEPT 20** • Records show the third wave of Covid-19 infections in Malaysia was traced to this day.

- SEPT 22** • Ismail Sabri says Covid-19-positive Sabahans will not be allowed to vote in the Sept 26 state election. Voters are allocated specific times to cast their ballots. Voters who are under quarantine may also vote if they obtain permission from the District Office and are accompanied by health officers.

- SEPT 23** • The Sabah Education Department orders for the temporary closure of 30 schools in Lahad Datu as more infections are detected in Sabah's east coast.

- SEPT 25** • The government says non-citizens will bear the full costs of Covid-19 quarantine upon their arrival in Malaysia.

- Previously the government had provided a RM4,700 subsidy for the quarantine (RM2,600 for the operations fixed charges and RM2,100 for accommodation).

- SEPT 26** • Dr Noor Hisham says people returning from Sabah between Sept 27 and Oct 10, following the state election on Sept 26, will need to undergo Covid-19 screening and the home surveillance order (HSO). The rule applies to those arriving at international or domestic entry points too.

- SEPT 28** • Administrative TEMCO is imposed in Tawau, Kunak, Semporna and Lahad Datu from Sept 29 to Oct 12.

## October

- OCT 1** • The government imposes an inter-district travel ban in Sabah from Oct 3 to Oct 16.

- OCT 2** • The Sarawak government bans arrival of Malaysians and non-Sarawakians coming from Sabah and Labuan from Oct 4 to 18. Sarawakians returning to their home state during that period must undergo a 14-day quarantine.

- The Selangor government offers free Covid-19 screenings for Selangor residents returning from Sabah.

- OCT 5** • Authorities announce CMCO in Kota Kinabalu, Penampang and Putatan in Sabah beginning Oct 7.

- OCT 6** • Sabah closes its borders to non-Sabahans except for those providing essential services, students and civil servants from Oct 12 to 25.

- OCT 7** • CMCO is extended to Klang, Selangor, as well as Papar, Sandakan and Tuaran in Sabah from Oct 9.

- OCT 8** • Malaysians entering Sarawak to undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine starting Oct 10.

- OCT 10** • Tropicana Golf & Country Resort hostel in Selangor is placed under 14-day EMCO starting Oct 12.

- OCT 11** • EMCO is imposed on Taman Khazanah Indah and PPR Mutiara Kasih in Lahad Datu from Oct 13 to 26.

- OCT 12** • CMCO in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Putrajaya begins from Oct 12 to 27; CMCO in Sabah is extended to Oct 26; EMCO in Felda Umas, Tawau from Oct 13 to 26.

- OCT 19** • EMCO is imposed on Kepayan Prison and prison staff quarters at Kampung Matambai from Oct 20 to Nov 2.

- OCT 20** • Employees in the private and public sectors, at the management and supervisory levels, in CMCO areas are instructed to work from home starting Oct 22.

- OCT 21** • Only 10 per cent of management and supervisory employees will be allowed to work in the office in CMCO areas, but only thrice a week, from 10am to 2pm.

- OCT 24** • Malaysia breaks the four-digit ceiling of new daily Covid-19 cases when it records 1,228 cases.

## November

- NOV 6** • The government announces a 'no cross-border travel' order for people from EMCO and CMCO areas for Deepavali on Nov 14.

- NOV 7** • The government announces that the CMCO will be imposed in Kedah, Penang, Perak, Negri Sembilan, Melaka, Johor and Terengganu from Nov 9 to Dec 6.

- The government says the CMCO in Klang Valley and Sabah is extended until Dec 6.

- NOV 11** • Ismail Sabri announces an EMCO on Medan 88, Bandar Salak Tinggi, Sepang, Selangor from Nov 12 to 25.

- NOV 13** • The government says three people from the same household are allowed to travel in one vehicle, including for ride-hailing services, in CMCO areas. Child-care centres can reopen, except in Kuching.

- NOV 16** • EMCO is imposed on Top Glove's dormitories in Meru, Selangor and its surrounding residential areas.

- NOV 18** • Malaysia and China ink agreement for access to Covid-19 vaccine.

- NOV 20** • The government says the CMCO will be lifted in Johor, Terengganu, Kedah (except Kulim) and Melaka from Nov 21. However, a CMCO begins in Kelantan on the same day.

- NOV 25** • EMCO is imposed in housing estates in Sungai Seluang in Kulim, Kedah and Tuaran, Sabah starting Nov 27.

- NOV 26** • Malaysia records its highest number of Covid-19 recovered cases in a day when 2,555 are cured from infection.

- NOV 27** • The government says music and Quran teachers are allowed to do one-on-one classes starting Nov 28.

- Government inks deal with Pfizer to vaccinate 6.4 million Malaysians.

- NOV 30** • Five more areas in Ipoh, Perak as well as in Sandakan and Lahad Datu, Sabah, are placed under the EMCO.

## December

- DEC 4** • Sabah reopens borders to allow social visits.

- DEC 5** • CMCO is lifted in most places except Sabah, Kuala Lumpur, most of Selangor and parts of Johor and Negri Sembilan. However, Ismail Sabri says interstate and inter-district travel will be allowed beginning Dec 7, except for areas under EMCO. He says police will no longer set up roadblocks but will instead tighten checks on SOP.

- DEC 7** • Ruling of four at a table rule is rescinded, while all eateries are allowed to operate from 6am to 2am.

- DEC 9** • MAEPS PKRC in Serdang is reactivated.

- DEC 10** • A record 2,234 new Covid-19 cases are detected in a day, the highest number so far.

- DEC 11** • CMCO ends at Tanah Merah, Pasir Mas and Machang, Kelantan.

- DEC 15** • Authorities say that Sabahans returning from Brunei need not undergo quarantine.

- DEC 18** • CMCO in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Sabah and several localities in other states is extended until Dec 31.

- The Health Ministry says 1,771 Covid-19 cases are recorded among healthcare workers, with 1,359 cases detected during the third wave of the pandemic. Nurses make up the biggest group, with 690 cases.

- DEC 19** • The Higher Education Ministry says university students are expected to return to campus as early as March 2021.

- DEC 20** • A new variant of Covid-19 known as VUI-202012/01 or Variant Under Investigation is detected in the United Kingdom.