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TO BOLSTER ANTI-VIRUS BATTLE

# KING DECLARES EMERGENCY UNTIL AUG 1

It will be lifted earlier if daily Covid-19 cases are kept under control

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**Y**ANG di-Pertuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah has declared a nationwide state of emergency until Aug 1 to bolster efforts to battle the Covid-19 pandemic.

The proclamation by the King yesterday came a day after the second phase of the Movement Control Order (MCO) was announced by Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

The health emergency was proclaimed by the king via a statement early yesterday morning.

Comptroller of the Royal Household Datuk Ahmad Fadil Shamsuddin said the king had decreed that a state of emergency would be implemented to control the Covid-19 outbreak in the country until Aug 1, or until an earlier date, if the daily number of positive Covid-19 cases could be controlled and effectively lowered.

The matter was decided following the king's audience with the prime minister at Istana Negara on Monday, and after briefings by top government officials.

The matter, he said, had also taken into account the king's consultations with the Malay rulers.

"The king is of the view that Covid-19 transmissions in the country are at a very critical level and that there is a need to proclaim an Emergency, based on Clause 1 under Article 150 of the Federal Constitution.

"It should be emphasised that His Majesty is very concerned about the safety of the people, especially at this time where some states are still facing floods."

He said the king had advised the people to remain calm and

resilient during the implementation of the Emergency and MCO for the security and benefit of all.

Later in a live address, Muhyiddin clarified that the state of emergency was not a military coup, assuring that no curfew would be enforced.

"The state of emergency declared by His Majesty the Yang di-Pertuan Agong is not a form of military coup. A curfew will also not be enforced. The civilian government will continue to function as usual."

In terms of government administration, Muhyiddin said the cabinet and state executive councils would continue to function in accordance with the Federal Constitution and any ordinance proclaimed by the king.

He guaranteed that the administrative and public service machineries of the federal and state governments would not be disrupted by the proclamation.

There would also be no Parliament or state legislative assembly sittings until a time set by the king, nor will there be any general, state or by-elections.

"As we all know, the people currently do not want elections to be held to prevent Covid-19 from spreading like what had happened after the recent Sabah state election.

"Of late, there have been parties urging for elections to be held. I never had any intention to not hold elections.

"The main thing that has prevented me from advising His Majesty from dissolving Parliament is the Covid-19 pandemic," he said.

Muhyiddin added that the decision not to hold elections amidst the ravaging Covid-19 outbreak was in line with one of five Maqasid Syariah principles, which is to protect lives.

It was his duty as the head of government, he said, to protect the lives of the people by protecting everyone from Covid-19.

"Therefore, I want to give my firm commitment that the general election will be held as soon as the independent special committee acknowledges that the Covid-19 pandemic has subsided and elections are safe to be held.

"At that time, it is up to the



Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin addressing the nation from Putrajaya yesterday on the state of emergency. BERNAMA PIC

people to choose which government is capable, and would be given the mandate to govern this country.

"This is my commitment and pledge which I will fulfil, *Insha-Allah.*"

Muhyiddin also assured that the judiciary would continue to uphold law and justice, and the government would continue to uphold its independence.

Muhyiddin said the king, throughout the Emergency period, may declare any ordinance necessary, according to circumstances.

In this context, he added, several Emergency Ordinances may be promulgated by the king, including matters related to the use of private hospital assets, temporary acquisition of land, buildings or private hospital movable assets or making requests for the use of private hospital resources, for the purpose of treating Covid-19 patients.

Muhyiddin said the government may seek more inclusive involvement from the private sector, including private healthcare facilities, to help ease the burden borne by government agencies, especially on public hospitals.

He said through this ordinance, assistance to be made available by the private sector include human resources, expertise, facil-

ities, assets, testing laboratories and utilities.

"An ordinance may also be promulgated to provide enforcement powers to the Malaysian Armed Forces in addition to the existing powers, in accordance with the powers accorded to the police under the Criminal Procedure Code or any other relevant law enforcement authorities.

"The Armed Forces will also be provided with the power to assist in performing the functions relating to public health and the functions performed by the relevant civil servants," he said, adding that border controls would also be tightened.

Muhyiddin also assured that economic activities would continue, subject to standard oper-

ating procedures and the MCO, and said the government was committed to ensure good governance throughout the Emergency period.

"To all stakeholders, I emphasise, Malaysia is open for business. In facing these challenging times, this state of emergency will give us the much needed calm and stability, as well as enable us to focus on economic recovery and regeneration.

"We remain committed to good governance during these times and we have a robust and dynamic regulatory ecosystem.

"Continued stability will enable us to sustain and build upon the economic recovery trajectory we have been working hard for since last year."