

COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS

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TASK FORCE TO STRENGTHEN KL, SELANGOR HEALTH SYSTEM

It addresses issues that require urgent response, including medical guidance, transport and treatment

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THE Health Ministry set up a special public health task force on July 8 to better manage the Covid-19 pandemic in the Klang Valley, Selangor and nearby areas.

This follows the surge in daily new cases in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, which recorded 1,271 and 4,400 cases, respectively, on Friday.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba said the Special Task Force for Greater Klang Valley was headed by the ministry's deputy director-general (public health), Datuk Dr Chong Chee Kheong.

Apart from the Klang Valley and Selangor, Dr Adham said the task force would be responsible for managing the pandemic in the southern part of Perak, the western part of Pahang, as well as the northern part of Negri Sembilan.

"Following a rise in new cases, there is a need to ensure that there is sufficient equipment, manpower, as well as other needs related to the management of the pandemic," he said on Friday.

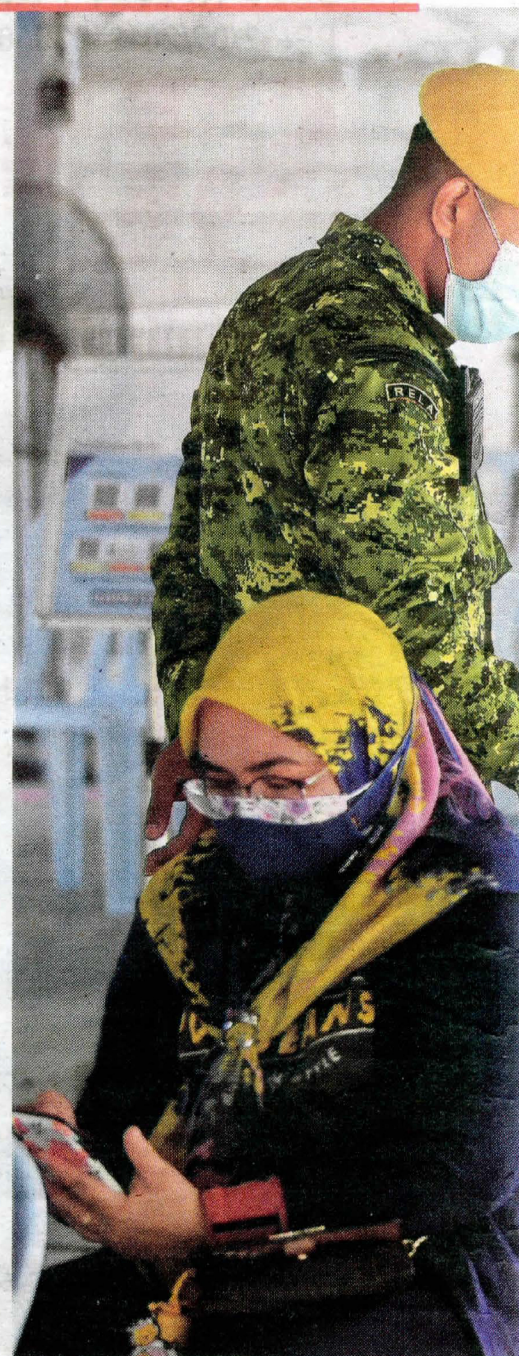
The task force, said Dr Adham, would report to the ministry's secretary-general, Datuk Mohd Shafiq Abdullah.

"The task force will solve issues that require urgent response, including medical guidance, transportation and treatment.

"In short, the task force will ensure that the public health system responds as fast as possible in the management of the pandemic."

Dr Adham said the task force would also outline and make the necessary preparations in the event the Emergency was lifted according to schedule on Aug 1.

He said the Emergency Ordinance (2021) had enabled the ministry to take over and use fa-



People waiting to receive their vaccine jab at the Axiata Arena Bukit Jalil vaccination centre in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

cilities belonging to other ministries and agencies for the management of the pandemic. This included the recent move to use Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Specialist Children's Hospital as a Covid-19 hospital.

He said once the emergency is lifted, the ministry would return the facilities to the respective ministries and agencies.

Dr Adham said the ministry had implemented a number of measures to better manage the Covid-19 pandemic in the Klang Valley, Selangor and other parts of the country.

He said these included reactivating the ministry's training institute (ILKKM) in Sungai Buloh near here to treat Covid-19 cases.

ILKKM in Sungai Buloh, which has a maximum capacity of 2,400 beds, will focus on providing treatment to Category 1 (asymptomatic) and Category 2 (with mild symptoms) Covid-19 cases.

"This will help increase the capacity and capability of the Malaysia Agro Exposition Park (MAEPS) integrated Covid-19 Quarantine and Low-Risk Treatment Centre (PKRC) 2.0 in providing treatment to Category 3 and Category 4 patients."

Since July 8, he said, the ministry had remobilised 110 healthcare workers, including medical officers, paramedics and ambu-

lance drivers from hospitals in the Klang Valley, Kedah, Perak and Terengganu to the MAEPS PKRC for up to six months.

"More healthcare workers from areas where the Covid-19 situation is under control will be remobilised to (the PKRC and hospitals treating Covid-19 cases in) the Klang Valley from time to time."

He said the ministry had added another 1,550 oxygen cylinders at MAEPS PKRC 2.0 for patients who might require oxygen aid.

On providing better care to children with Covid-19, whose parents are being hospitalised, he said the ministry had engaged volunteers, including from the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, for assistance.

"To decongest and increase the capacity of public hospitals designated to treat Covid-19 cases, we have begun decanting non-Covid-19 patients to private hospitals in the Klang Valley and other neighbouring states, including Melaka and Perak."

The ministry, he said, had expanded cooperation with the armed forces by enabling Tuanku Mizan Armed Forces Hospital to accept categories 3 and 4 Covid-19 patients.

The hospital, which has a ca-

capacity of 150 beds, has facilities for ventilation complete with built-in oxygen supply, medical equipment and devices, suction and power points, he added.

To accelerate the "find, test, trace and isolate" system of Covid-19 cases, he said, 509 general practitioners had been given permission to issue home surveillance and observation orders to categories 1 and 2 patients.

He also stressed the importance of accelerating the vaccination rate in the Klang Valley and Selangor. He said, 31.7 per cent of the population in Selangor had been given one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine, and 9.3 per cent had been fully vaccinated.

In Kuala Lumpur, 73.4 per cent of the population have received at least one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine, with 17.3 per cent fully vaccinated.

Dr Adham said the ministry would continue to ramp up daily Covid-19 screenings in localities placed under the Enhanced Movement Control Order in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

He said the number of Covid-19 tests conducted in EMCO areas in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor increased to 25,500 a day on July 6 and was expected to further increase in the coming days.

"The testing and screening carried out through active case detection will enable the ministry to identify positive cases, including those who are asymptomatic."

"This will enable the ministry to isolate cases, provide treatment and subsequently prevent the spread of the virus."

He said if the testing and screening were not conducted in the affected areas, it would not enable the ministry to identify asymptomatic cases to break the chain of transmission of the virus in the community.

He also said the ministry had decided to accelerate the vaccination of people residing in areas affected by the implementation of the EMCO in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

The process, he said, would be carried out when the ministry had traced and isolated people who tested positive for the virus in the areas.

"The EMCO is usually implemented for a period of 14 days. Hence, vaccination must be carried out immediately once the EMCO has been lifted."

"The vaccination process may be conducted in the areas (that were placed under the EMCO) or at the nearest vaccination centres."



Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba speaking at a press conference to announce the formation of a task force for the Greater Klang Valley in Putrajaya on Friday. PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH