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PRESS RELEASE

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MEDIA STATEMENT

ON THE REDUCTION OF SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES BASED ON THE CURRENT SITUATION OF COVID-19 IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

15 Muharram 1442 / 03 September 2020

1. The Ministry of Health would like to announce that today, Thursday, 15 Muharram 1442 / 03 September 2020, **there is 1 new case** of COVID-19 infection in the country. Therefore, as of now the total number of COVID-19 cases in Brunei Darussalam is **145 cases**.
 - **Case 145** is a 33 year old man who arrived in Brunei Darussalam on Royal Brunei BI874 flight (seated at 32H) on 28 August 2020 via Kuala Lumpur from Indonesia. This case has been detected through the COVID-19 swab test screening program for individuals who has just arrived in the country from abroad. He showed no signs of infection and is currently being treated at the National Isolation

Centre. The Ministry of Health has identified a total of 32 contacts of which 26 have undergone the COVID-19 swab test and were confirmed negative, while the rest are still awaiting test results.

2. Meanwhile, the 2 cases that are being treated at the National Isolation Centre are in a stable condition. **The total number of cases that has recovered remains 139 individuals.**

3. Furthermore, 62 individuals are undergoing quarantine order at monitoring centers provided by the Government are in a stable condition and does not have any signs of infection. In addition, a total of **476 individuals** are undergoing mandatory self-isolation at the monitoring centers provided by the Government, which are individuals that have just arrived in this country after traveling from abroad. At present, a total of **5,147 individuals** have completed their mandatory self-isolation at the monitoring centers.

4. In the past 24 hours, a total of **289 samples** have been tested for the SARS-CoV-2 virus that brings the total number of laboratory tests conducted since January 2020 to **52,739 tests**.

5. Meanwhile, taking into account the situation of COVID-19 in Brunei Darussalam which is currently under control, with the consent of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, the Ministry of Health would like to inform the public on the **changes** in the reduction of the social distancing measures implemented which will **commence on Monday, 07 September 2020**, as follows:
 - i) Allowing Activity centres for the elderly to be escalated from Level 3 to Level 4.

 - ii) Increasing the capacity for Mass Gathering from 200 people to 350 people, where the Guidelines will be uploaded in the Ministry of Health's website.

Information regarding the reduction of the social distancing measures for (Level 4) Activity centres for the elderly will be explained by The Honorable Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

Meanwhile, the reduction of social distancing measures for other activities remains the same.

6. In this regard, the Ministry of Health requires the public to comply with all regulations and directives related to the reduction of social distancing measures that have been issued and are still in force at the moment.
 - i) The public are required to use the BruHealth application and scan the QR Code when they enter and exit premises, especially at public areas such as shopping malls, retail shops, restaurants, beauty establishments, barber shops and others. Furthermore, commencing Monday, 7 September 2020, premise owners are required to print and display their QR code at their respective entrances.

The public are urged to take the usage of the BruHealth application seriously, especially in scanning the QR Code as it is used by the Ministry of Health for contact tracing purposes in the event of an outbreak of infection.

- ii) The public are also required to practice their social responsibilities by maintaining personal hygiene, practice proper cough and sneeze etiquette, recommended to wear a face mask in crowded public places and if feeling unwell, not to go to public places and attend social gatherings. The public especially those attending Friday prayers are reminded that they are required to wear a face mask when they are within the compounds of the mosques, before and after the Friday prayers, as well as bringing their own prayer mat and to scan the QR Code when entering the mosque or surau.
- iii) Any individual found to be in violation of or disobey any order issued shall be an offense under the Infectious Diseases Act (Section 204), which if found guilty can be

issued compound fine up to \$5,000 or can be prosecuted in court carrying a fine up to \$10,000 or imprisonment up to 6 months or both. The Ministry will not hesitate to take legal action against anyone who does not comply with the directives issued.

7. Since the enforcement of the directives issued during the pandemic in June 2020 until at present, a total of **636 business premises** have been inspected nationwide, where **517** violations have been found and compound fines issued. Among the common offences are that food handlers are not wearing face masks while working and premises do not perform temperature checks on customers and visitors.
8. The Ministry of Health will continue to monitor the situation of the outbreak at the national as well as regional and global level and carry out ongoing risk assessments to consider further mitigation measures. If the outbreak situation becomes alarming yet again, the Ministry of Health will not hesitate to tighten the social distancing measures that need

to be taken to control the outbreak. The Ministry of Health will notify the public of any changes to this situation, if necessary from time to time.

9. For further information and latest updates, members of the public can visit the official website of the Ministry of Health at **www.moh.gov.bn** or by contacting the **Health Advice Line 148** or through the **BruHealth App** or the app **healthinfo.gov.bn**

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Reference : KK/PR/2

Date : 15 Muharram 1442H / 03 September 2020