



MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE CURRENT COVID-19 INFECTION IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

12 March 2020

1. The Ministry of Health Brunei Darussalam would like to inform the public of the recent development following the confirmation of 11 COVID-19 cases on 11 March 2020,
2. As of today, 14 new cases have been confirmed bringing the **total number of COVID-19 cases in Brunei Darussalam to 25 people**. 13 of these new cases are related to the religious congregation (tabligh) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
 - Case 12 is a local man aged 53, who attended the religious congregation (tabligh) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He returned to Brunei on 4 March 2020 on Air Asia flight AK5644 from Miri, Sarawak. He traveled back to Brunei Darussalam with Case 7, Case 8 and Case 21. He started showing symptoms (fever) on 6 March 2020.
 - Case 13 is a local man aged 45, who also attended the same religious congregation in Kuala Lumpur. He returned to Brunei on Air Asia flight AK278 (seat no. 19A) on 3 March 2020 and started showing symptoms (headache and cough) the next day.

- Case 14 is the wife of Case 13 who has no travel history to Kuala Lumpur. She is currently not having any symptoms.
- Case 15 is a local man aged 33 who also attended the religious event in Kuala Lumpur. He returned to Brunei on 3 March 2020 on Air Asia flight AK278 and has not showed any symptoms.
- Case 16 is a local man aged 63, who also attended the religious event in Kuala Lumpur. He returned home on 5 March 2020 on Royal Brunei flight BI872 and is not having any symptoms.
- Case 17 is a local man aged 33 who also attended the religious gathering in Kuala Lumpur. He returned home on 3 March 2020 on Royal Brunei flight BI874 to Bandar Seri Begawan and is not showing any symptoms.
- Case 18, 30 years, is the wife of Case 8 who has no travel history to Kuala Lumpur. She is having mild symptoms (cough and flu).
- Case 19 is a local man aged 34 with a travel history to Kuala Lumpur. He was assigned as the driver for Bruneians attending the religious congregation (tabligh) but did not participate in the event. He returned to Bandar Seri Begawan on 3 March 2020 on Royal Brunei flight BI874 and is currently not showing any symptoms.

- Case 20 is a local man aged 64 who also attended the religious event in Kuala Lumpur. He went to Kuala Lumpur on 27 February 2020 and returned to Bandar Seri Begawan on 29 Februari 2020 on Air Asia flight AK278. He started showing symptoms (cough and flu) on 9 March 2020.
 - Case 21 is a local man aged 35, who also attended the religious gathering in Kuala Lumpur. He left Kuala Lumpur on 4 March 2020 on Air Asia flight AK5644 to Miri, Sarawak. He then shared the same transport with Case 7, Case 8 and Case 12 to return to Brunei. He is not showing any symptoms.
 - Case 22 is a local man aged 31, who is a co-worker to Case 3. He has no travel history to Kuala Lumpur and is not showing any symptoms. He was tested for COVID-19 as part of contact investigation for Case 3.
 - Case 23 is a local man aged 63 who also attended the religious gathering in Kuala Lumpur and he is not showing any symptoms.
 - Case 24 is a local man aged 30 who also attended the religious event in Kuala Lumpur and is currently not showing any symptoms.
3. Meanwhile, Case 25 is a local man aged 64 who has a travel history to Kuala Lumpur and Cambodia but did not participate in the religious event held at Masjid Jamek Seri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur. He returned back to Brunei on 4 March 2020 and started developing symptoms on 8 March 2020.

4. Contact tracing for today's newly confirmed cases is currently ongoing where close contacts (including family members, work colleagues or anyone who has been in the company of the case) will be contacted and their risk of being infected will be assessed. If the contacts are found to be exposed to the confirmed cases, they will undergo laboratory testing for COVID-19 and a Quarantine Order will be issued.

5. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health would like to update the total number of local citizens who have participated in the religious congregation (tabligh) at Masjid Jamek Seri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur from 28 February to 3 March 2020. To date, a total of 81 Bruneians have been identified as participants at the religious event where 70 of them have returned to Brunei Darussalam. Of the 70, 66 have underwent the laboratory testing for COVID-19 while 4 are still being tracked. Of the 66 who have been tested, 16 have been found positive, 25 found negative while another 25 are still awaiting results. Meanwhile, 11 Bruneians are currently outside of the country, including 3 who are studying in Malaysia. The Ministry urges these individuals to go for laboratory testing for COVID-19 as soon as possible.

6. The Ministry of Health would also like to inform the public that all confirmed cases are currently treated at the National Isolation Centre. They are well and stable, afebrile and do not require any breathing assistance.

7. Meanwhile, as stated in the Media Statement on 9 March 2020, the Ministry of Health had sent samples from the first five confirmed cases for further validation to the WHO Reference Laboratory in Singapore, in accordance to WHO guidelines. These tests have validated that the cases are positive for COVID-19. With this, Brunei Darussalam is verified for conducting laboratory testing for COVID-19 in the country.

8. Amendments to the Infectious Disease Act (Chapter 204) and its Regulations i.e. Infectious Diseases (Amendment of Schedule) Notification, 2020 dan Infectious Diseases (Quarantine) (Amendment) Regulations, 2020 have gazetted.

9. Under the Act, anyone who, or suspected to be, a case, carrier or contact of an infectious disease may be required to undergo medical examination or medical treatment either in hospital or any other place as determined by the Director-General Ministry of Health. Failure to comply to this provision is an offence under this Law and the person may be ordered to be transferred to a hospital or another place where he can be detained and, if necessary, isolated until examination or treatment has been undertaken.

10. In addition, those who obstruct or assisted in obstructing authorized officers in carrying their duties or provided false information or misleading information is also an offence under the Law.

11. As such, the person may be fined to up to \$10,000 or imprisoned for a period of not more than 6 months or both (first offence). For a second offence, may be fined to up to \$20,000 or imprisoned for a period of not more than one year or both.

12. For further information and latest developments, go to the Ministry of Health's website www.moh.gov.bn or call **Health Advice Line 148** (operating 24-hours).

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Reference : KK/PR/2
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