

COVID-19: The Malaysian Fight on World Pandemic

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Abstract

Coronavirus Diseases 2019 (COVID-19) is world pandemic nowadays which give big impact to all countries. Various action had been taken by many countries including Malaysia to cope the virus to spread and reduce number of killed by corona virus. This article discusses the trend of pandemic wave, the action of Malaysia government toward the pandemic and Malaysian knowledge and attitude towards government order.

Keywords: COVID-19, Government initiatives, MCO, EMCO, TEMCO, AEMCO and CMCO

Introduction

The World Health Organization reported Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), an unique respiratory disease originating in Wuhan, on January 12, 2020, before becoming pandemic in all countries (MdShah, A.U et al,2020; COVID-19,2020) The infectious virus will quickly spread through the respiratory (WHO, 2020) and able to kill innocent people (Larson J, 2020). Currently, the death number had reach 1,093,096 globally as updated at October 14, 2020. The highest cases were in United States (USA) which is 8,103,436 and Malaysia in 90th place with 17,540 cases recorded on October 14, 2020 (Coronavirus Update, 2020). According to the Figure 1 shows the number of raise case in world was constantly increase this make all country more concern to all national leaders across the country. Especially, Malaysia cause lately there are significant increase cases (Berita Harian, 2020).

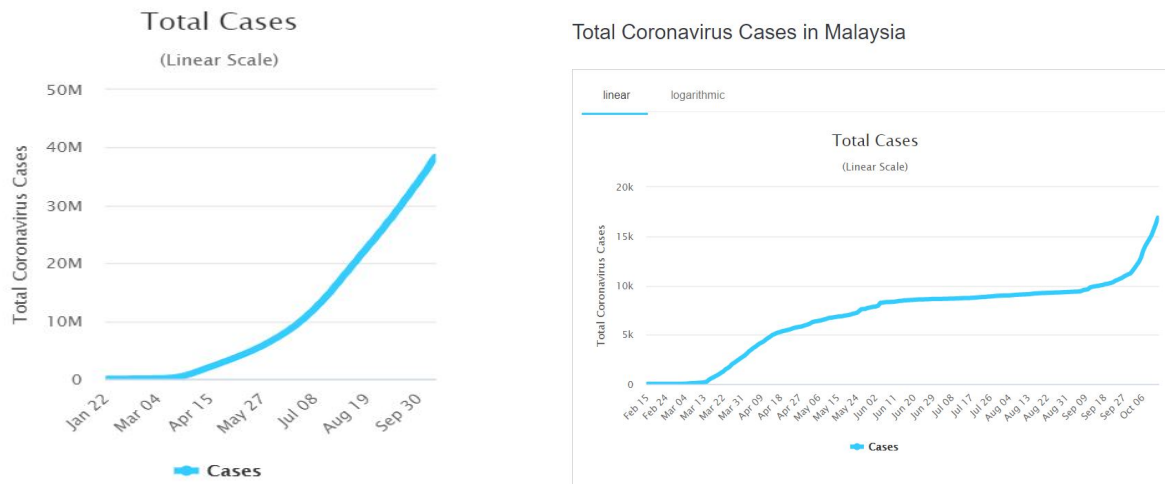


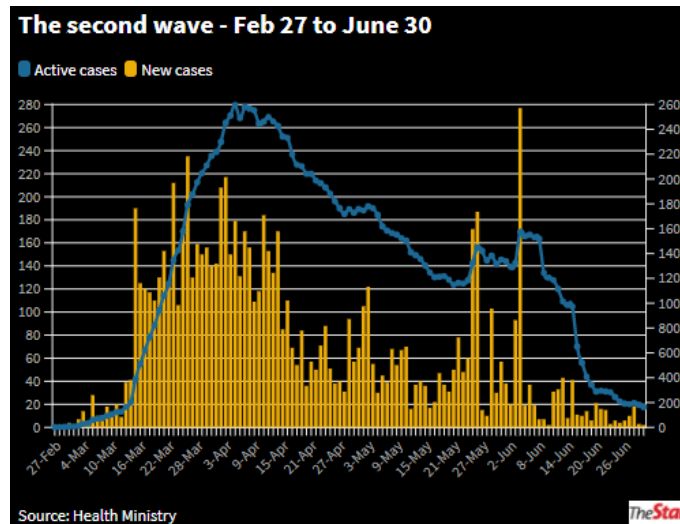
Figure 1: Graph view of total corona cases in Malaysia and globally (Coronavirus Update, 2020).

Malaysia pandemic wave

On 24 January 2020, the first wave of infection began with the discovery of 22 cases, 12 of which had a travel history to the affected countries and regions. A total of 22 cases were reported in the first wave (cases 1 to 22). Of these 12 cases, 8 are cases of near contact involving Patient Under Investigation (PUI), while two (2) are cases of another humanitarian aid mission that brought home Malaysian from Hubei Province, China returning to Malaysia. All cases have healed from the first wave and can go home (KKM, 2020). There were 11 days, from 16 to 26 February 2020, with no cases (World Health Organization, 2020).

The second wave, which began on 27 February 2020, has raised new challenges to Malaysia and within three weeks, the virus had spread to every state and federal territory in the country (Health Analytics, 2020). These cases detected among tabligh assembly in Seri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur have been reported so far in the investigation conducted (KKM, 2020). Around 14,500 Malaysians and some 1,500 foreigners attended the four-day meeting from Feb 27 to March 3. Second wave have been recorded, a total of 3,375 infections were reported by this cluster and 17 sub-clusters were spawned. This cluster was eventually declared over on July 8, 2020, has registered more than 30 deaths (Ahmad, R., & Pfordten, D., 2020).

Table 1: Below is the line chart of novel second wave cases



Meanwhile the third wave is driven by Sabah and Kedah cluster cases, with Selangor also recording a significant rise in cases. Because of this wave, the health ministry decided to be called on medical and health staff to volunteer their services and help handle the third wave of infections with COVID-19 (Reporters, F.,2020). From 1 to 30 September 2020, around 7,450 cases (62%) were recorded from Benteng LD cluster, Sabah while 1,334 cases from Tembok and Sungai cluster, Kedah and within two weeks only, Selangor also recorded 2,746 cases (20% increase) from cluster there (Ahmad, R., & Pfordten, D., 2020).

Global pandemic wave

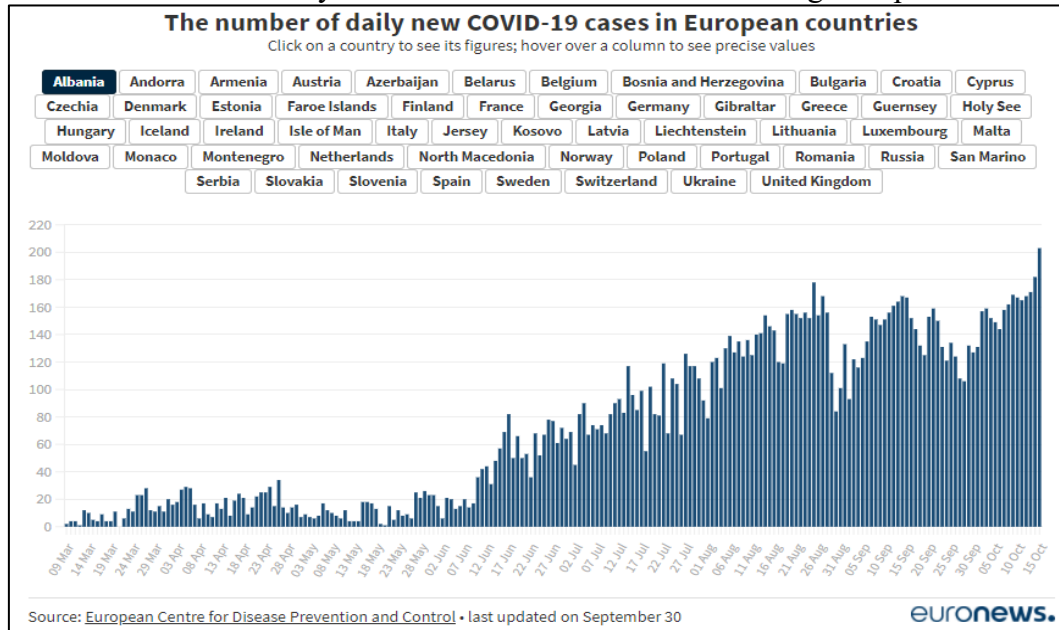
On 31 December 2019, the WHO China Country Office was informed of cases of pneumonia unknown aetiology (unknown cause) detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. On 11 and 12 January 2020, WHO received further detailed information from the National Health Commission China that the outbreak is associated with exposures in one seafood market in Wuhan City. Until 20 January, first wave recorded a total case from four countries including China (278 cases), Thailand (2 cases), Japan (1 case) and the Republic of Korea (1 case) which is six death were reported from Wuhan itself, 51 were severely ill and another 12 are in critical condition (World Health Organization, 2020).

Table 2: Countries, territories, or areas with reported confirmed cases of 2019-nCov, 20 January 2020

WHO Regional Office	Country, territory, area	Total number of confirmed cases
WPRO	China – Hubei Province	258
	China – Guangdong	14
	China – Beijing Municipality	5
	China – Shanghai Municipality	1
	Japan	1
	Republic of Korea	1
SEARO	Thailand	2
Total confirmed cases		282

The relaxation of these lockout steps, increased public laxity with non-pharmaceutical interventions (wearing masks, distancing) and the fact that the majority of the population remains resistant to disease are the main reasons for a second wave of COVID-19 across Europe (Curley, C., 2020). The British government decide to continue calls for another national lockdown and France will reimpose a state of health emergency once Europe faced a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic (Sonwalkar, P., 2020). According to WHO, almost 700 000 new cases registered and European has documented the highest weekly incidence of COVID-19 cases since the beginning of the pandemic. While for the third wave of global, there is still no updated report related to this pandemic published in any reliable sources.

Table 3: Bar chart of daily number new COVID-19 cases among European countries



Movement Control Order (MCO)

The government of Malaysia released a Movement Control Order (MCO) on the spread of the Corona virus worldwide on 18 March 2020 (MdShah, A.U et al, 2020) after the first Malaysian case of COVID-19 was identified on 24 January 2020 and raise of infected citizen. The government of Malaysia is taking this step to protect the citizen with a population of about 32,487855 as of Wednesday, August 13, 2020, based on the latest United Nations estimates. Government also ensures that its citizens are obeyed Movement Control Order from all 328,550 km² of total land area, consisting of two regions separated by about 640 miles from the South China Sea (Malaysia Population, 2020). In Malaysia there are several MCO be issues along this year such as EMCO, TEMCO, AEMCO and CMCO.

Firstly, enhanced movement control order (EMCO) which begin on 27 Mac for 14 days at certain place be reported infected as further inspection to curb the virus from be spreading (Zumira, Z., 2020). PKPD is full control of movement or Total lockdown. If the case is extremely infectious and difficult to monitor, no movement is permitted and enforced (Pandu Laju, 2020) (Zahid, S.J., 2020). There are several guidelines that citizen at that area should be followed. Which are in the affected areas, people are not permitted to leave. Second, visitors and non-residents are not allowed to enter the area. Third, all commercial operations are stopped except for the specific products and services premises. Fourth, government had provided medical base at each PKPD area. Lastly, the state government or any group can channel food. (Zumira, Z., 2020; PMO, 2020). PKPD at Batu 21-24 Sungai Lui, Hulu Langat, Selangor. Governments had identified 71 cases positive COVID-19 from Maahad Tahfiz An-Nabawwiyah residents. As the number was high, government had issued to evacuate PKPD at that area (PMO, 2020).

Secondly, Targeted Enhanced Movement Control Order (TEMCO). Total lock down in identified local areas involving COVID-19 cases within a certain area, such as in villages, hostels, and housing. Only the enforcement area is smaller, just like the EMCO (Zumira, Z., 2020; Pandu Laju, 2020). TEMCO has also been implemented by the government at many locations around the nation as new cases surge. The latest to be locked down under TEMCO was a jailed in Alor Setar , Kedah, where the current cluster is responsible for a third of the recent cases (Zahid, S.J., 2020).

Third, Administrative Enhanced Movement Control Order (AEMCO). Similarly, AEMCO refers to particular areas of high risk, but with less limitations. Subject to clearance by officials stationed there, people of areas put under the order are permitted to move inside and travel out of the designated area. Screening and testing, similar to EMCO, applies to all residents in the AEMCO location, although food and essential services can function normally (Zahid, S.J., 2020; Pandu Laju, 2020).

Lastly, Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO). By prohibiting gatherings at events, festivals or social gatherings, movement control is looser than TEMCO and EMCO, while the economic sector is still permitted to function as normal by complying with standard operating procedures (SOP). Business hours are also restricted and government interference, such as roadblocks and on-site surveillance, is taking place (Pandu Laju, 2020; Zahid, S.J., 2020). According to Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, CMCO should be introduced on 14 October in Selangor, Putrajaya and Kuala Lumpur. An updated and stricter CMCO took effect at midnight yesterday also in 36 locations within the Klang district in Selangor, and three districts in Sabah in Sandakan, Papar, and Tuaran, Sabah (Zahid, S.J., 2020).

Action taken by MOH

Coronavirus Preventive Campaigns

The spread of coronavirus has reduced the manufacturing activities globally. According to available statistics, if the outbreak continues, due to its direct and indirect effects on business environments, economic indicators are likely to decline in the near future. Therefore, given the involvement of almost all countries of the world in this disease and its progressive trend, the World Health Organization (WHO) and International Labor Organization (ILO) have recommended that all countries should be prepared to prevent and control the disease (Rafeemanesh et al., 2020). Ministry of Health (MOH) in Malaysia is actively implementing the 'Avoid Close Contact' campaign, as a step to prevent a second wave of COVID-19 outbreak in the country. It was necessary to educate the public to avoid talking while standing close to each other, as small water droplets are released into the air and could land onto others as far as one meter away. Moreover, World Health Organization (WHO) has declared COVID-19 as a pandemic on 12th March 2020. This was due to the increase in the number of cases reported around the world. Based on that, one of the measures to reduce the impact of this pandemic is to practice social distancing. In view of this MOH recommends social distancing measures as follows:

A. Social Distancing for Workplaces - Workplace measures

- Encourage employees to stay home and notify workplace administrators when sick.
- If employees develop symptoms at work, avoid contact with fellow employees and inform employers (for screening/home surveillance).
- Encourage staff to telework when feasible: In between departments, Interstate, Inter organization
- When employee is on home surveillance
- Encourage no handshake policy
- Increasing physical space between workers at the worksite (1 metre apart)
- Staggering work schedules
- Limit in-person meetings. If unavoidable, meeting should be short)
- Employees are encouraged to take their meals at their desk
- Avoid congregating in work and photocopier rooms
- Avoid large work-related gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, after-work functions).

- Avoid non-essential work travel

B. Social Distancing for Individuals and Families at Home

- Those who have symptoms are advised to stay at home and self-isolate themselves, avoid contact with family members (protective self separation), avoid going out unless absolutely necessary (following precautions) and avoid public transport where possible.
- Individuals at increased risk of severe illness (e.g. those with chronic diseases) should consider voluntary avoidance of crowded places e.g. large gatherings
- Limit recreational or other leisure classes, meetings and activities
- Stock up on food and medication to avoid frequent outings
- Consider getting home delivery food, medication or other essentials
- Limit visitors
- Establish ways to communicate with others (e.g., family, friends, coworkers) e.g. telecommunication
- Consider online payment methods for payment of utilities etc.

C. Social Distancing for Schools and Childcare

- Reduce the frequency of large gatherings (e.g., assemblies), and limit the number of attendees per gathering.
- Alter schedules to reduce mixing (e.g., stagger recess, entry/dismissal times)
- Limit inter-school interactions
- Consider distance or e-learning in some settings or for students at increased risk of severe illness

D. Social Distancing for Assisted or Senior Living Facilities

- Reduce large gatherings (e.g., group social events).
- Alter schedules to reduce mixing (e.g., stagger meal, activity, arrival/departure times).
- Limit programs with external staff.
- Consider having residents stay in facility and limit exposure to the general community
- Limit visitors and screen them before allowing entry.

Other campaigns to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are:

- Clean the hands often. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub. Every single day keep washing those hands. Wash the hands any time you touch things others might have touched. Take 20 seconds and wash thoroughly with soap and warm water.
- Maintain a safe distance from anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
- Wear a mask when physical distancing is not possible. Masks can help prevent the spread of the virus from the person wearing the mask to others. Masks alone do not protect against COVID-19, and should be combined with physical distancing and hand hygiene
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cover nose and mouth with bent elbow or a tissue when cough or sneeze.
- Stay home if feel unwell.
- If have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention.

What are the symptoms of infection?

- 1 Fever
- 2 Cough
- 3 Difficulty in Breathing

If you develop the above symptoms, seek medical attention immediately at the nearest clinic or hospital.

HOW DOES THE VIRUS SPREAD?

Coronaviruses can spread via respiratory secretions:

- A Coughing and sneezing by an infected person.
- B Direct physical contact with an infected person.
- C Touching or coming in contact with surfaces or objects contaminated with the virus.

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COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new strain of the coronavirus that has never been previously identified. Based on current available information, human-to-human transmission of COVID-19 is via respiratory droplets or direct contact.

How can individual infected with the virus prevent transmission to others?

- 1 Wear face mask.
- 2 Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Dispose tissue after use and clean hands with soaps and water or sanitizer.
- 3 Always maintain good personal hygiene and cleanliness.

HOW DO YOU PREVENT INFECTION?

- Maintain at least 1 meter distance from those who are coughing, sneezing and have a fever.
- Wash hands frequently with water and soap or sanitizer.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth frequently.
- Avoid visit countries with active transmission such as China.

Is there a vaccine or treatment?

Currently there is no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. Infected individuals should seek medical care to help relieve the symptoms.

SCAN ME

CEGAH COVID-19

JARAKKAN DIRI ANDA SEJAUH 1 METER

SEKIRANYA ANDA BERGEJALA ATAU SEKIRANYA ANDA NAMPAK ORANG BERGEJALA.

Ini kerana, percikan partikel boleh tersebar sejauh satu (1) meter ketika batuk atau bersin.



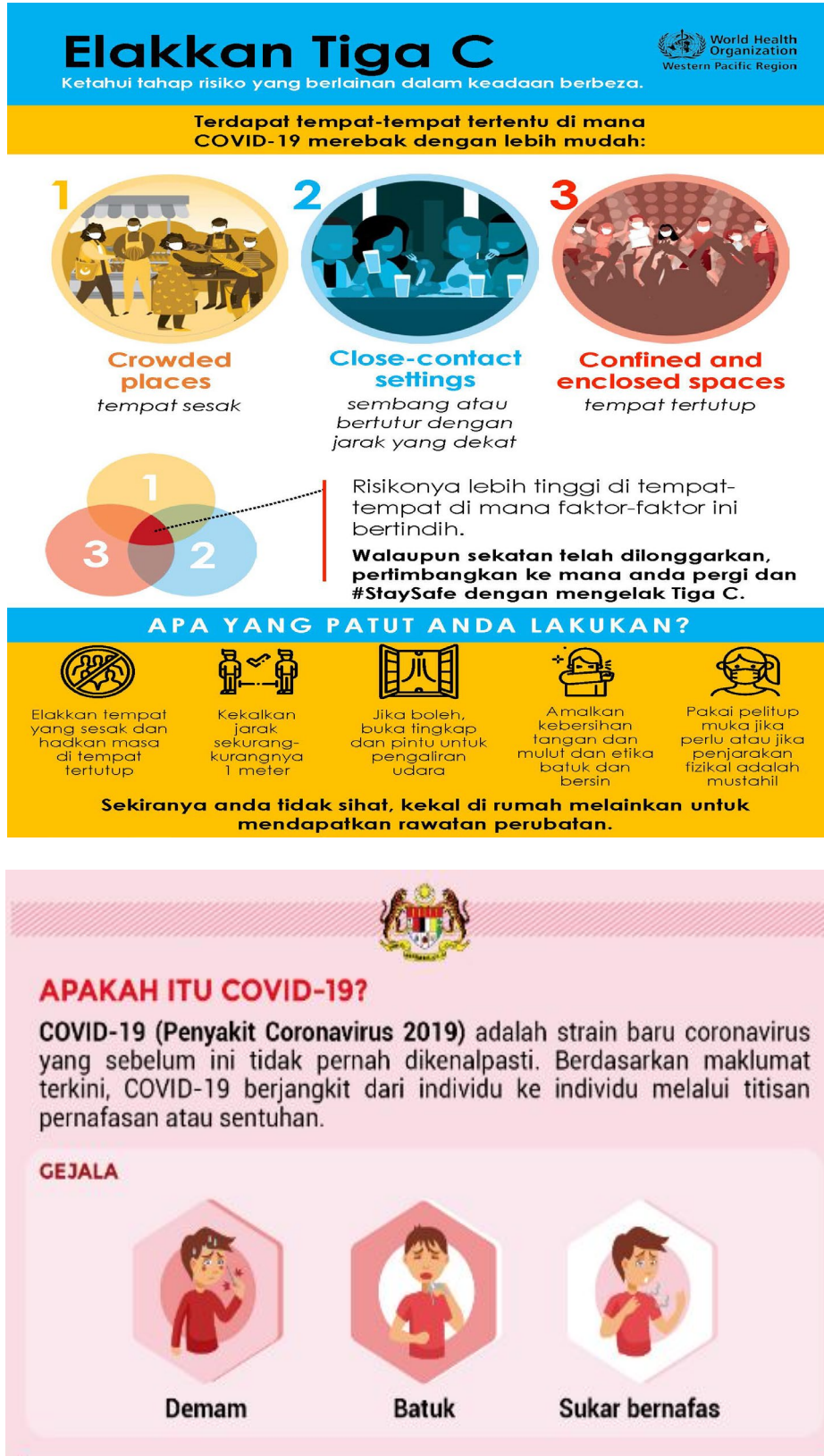


Figure 2: Infographics use in Malaysia campaign

Compliance rate towards Movement Control Order (MCO)

As the pandemic of COVID-19 started hit Malaysia back in March 2020, Malaysia government has implemented so many initiative and campaigns to give best health coverage to their citizens. When the outbreak started, the National Security Council (NSC) has quickly commended the first Movement Control Order (MCO). This step was implemented on 18 March 2020 after the council had discussed and considered the technical guidance with Ministry of Health (MOH). This MCO is later continue until 31 December 2020 (Phase 8) as reported by Flanders Trade (2020) below: -

Table 4: Malaysia Movement Control Order.

Phase	Preventive Measures	Date
1	Movement Control Order (MCO)	18 March -31 March 2020
2	Movement Control Order (MCO)	1 April – 14 April 2020
3	Movement Control Order (MCO)	15 April – 28 April 2020
4	Movement Control Order (MCO)	29 April – May 2020
5	Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO)	4 May – 11 May 2020
6	Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO)	12 May – 9 June 2020
7	Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO)	10 June – 31 August 2020
8	Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO)	1 Sept – 31 Dec2020.

Under the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) most business activities and school allowed resuming their operations as usual with strict Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) such as recording the temperatures of visitors to their premises and imposing social distance. Failure to comply with the RMCO restrictions, including the mask requirement, may result in a fine of RM 1000 or more, and/or jail time. This preventive measure is proven to reduce the number of COVID-19 cases where it showed the downtrends, thus demonstrating the effectiveness of movement control and its compliance (Tang, 2020).

The first week of MCO showed most Malaysian are obeyed with the orders with 95% compliance rate on the 6th day of MCO as reported by Senior Minister for Security and Minister of Defence (Anis M.N., 2020). He mentioned this happened because most Malaysian really understand the need for the enforcement which to curb the spread of COVID-19 (Ministry of Defence, 2020). The high-level compliance among Malaysian remain high even when the government introduce the less restriction, more relaxed Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO). This shows Malaysian are clearly capable of self-regulation in discipline themselves (Bernama², 2020).

Discussion and Conclusion

The fast action of Malaysia's government to issue MCO were life savior. Through the report graph the first MCO able to decline the value to single digit of positive patient covid-19. Through every wave of covid-19 spread, government always alert to cope and take fast action to cope the pandemic from being spread. Which, by issue several MCO suitable with time and place such as EMCO, TEMCO, TEMCO, AEMCO and CMCO. The government always keep reminding its citizen and deliver information through many type mediums. Such as poster which more infographic to attract its citizen. Besides that, the major influenced of decline number of positive infectious is Malaysia citizen. The Malaysian was given good respond and attitude to follow the government order to help government together cope the pandemic from being destitute. Even recently, the number of positive COVID-19 had increase and its worried. Malaysian must keep follow the MOH order to keep it under control and help Malaysia to be better place with new norm.

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