



KERATAN AKHBAR

SURAT KHABAR	:	THE SUN		
TARIKH	:	17/5/2021	MUKA SURAT	: 5
JABATAN	:	ZOO NEGARA		
KLASIFIKASI	:	PERHATIAN		

Zoo Negara running out of funds

The Sun 17/5/2021 M/S 5

Repeated and prolonged lockdowns draining reserves, resources needed to care for animals

By **ALISHA NUR MOHD NOOR**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on denizens of Zoo Negara.

If the third movement control order (MCO 3), that has been imposed to curb the latest resurgence of infections, is extended beyond June 7, the zoo is likely to run out of financial and other resources to care

for the animals.

"The repeated and prolonged lockdown is putting the welfare of the animals at risk," Zoo Negara deputy president Rosly@Rahmat Ahmat Lana told *theSun*.

"With the lockdown, income from gate takings has practically dropped to zero.

"Reserves are also running low. We managed to survive the first MCO, with money donated by members of

the public, together with the RM1.3 million given by the government in April last year."

However, the zoo will be placed in a "very precarious position" if there is a prolonged lockdown, he added.

The first MCO, from March 18 to Aug 1 last year, had drained resources needed to care for the animals.

A second lockdown that covered several states from Jan 13 to mid-February pushed the zoo closer to the brink.

Rosly is counting on the government not to extend the third lockdown beyond the stipulated 25 days.

"I understand that this round of

MCO is to prevent a surge that may result from people visiting each other during Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

"Now that the government has put a stop to that, I hope there will not be a need to extend the MCO."

The latest round of restrictions, announced by Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, is in response to the latest resurgence in the number of infections.

The country has been seeing 3,000 to 5,000 new cases a day for at least two weeks now.

Rosly said it will be difficult for the zoo to ensure the welfare of the animals if MCO 3 lasts much longer.

The zoo's largest financial

commitment is the monthly electricity bill, and he estimated that there is enough money left to last only two or three months.

Last Monday, entrepreneur and philanthropist Ustaz Ebit Lew donated RM25,000 worth of food to the zoo.

The Malaysian Quarantine and Inspection Services also sent about eight tonnes of confiscated frozen chicken and buffalo meat to the zoo last week," Rosly said.

If the lockdown persists indefinitely, the zoo will need a new allocation from the government or an infusion of funds from well-wishers, he added.