General

PPPH frontliners send students back to hometowns

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Kuantan, 28 May 2020 - Coordinating over 100 trips of university and external buses to send students to respective hometowns from 30 April until 14 May 2020 was an invaluable experience for the task force and drivers at the Department of Property Management & Development (PPPH).

Working at nights in Ramadan did not deter the task force from carrying out the responsibility to ensure all the safety procedures during the Movement Control Order (MCO) were observed to guarantee the students arrive in their hometowns safely.

The PPPH manager who led the task force, Ernie Nurazlin Lizam said they managed to accomplish the tasks of sending students on schedule and approval of the relevant agencies to the eastern, southern, western, central, and northern zones, Perak, Sabah and Sarawak, with the assistance from the Student Affairs and Alumni Department (SAFFAD), University Health Centre (PKU) and Security Division.

“This operation is a new experience for PPPH in handling crisis.

“Among the challenges was when we faced with a shortage of buses because several UMP buses were out of order.

“The buses were under scheduled maintenance, but it cannot be done during the MCO.

“Since this operation involves long distances, the buses must be in good condition,” she said.

She added that they received cooperation from external bus operators such as MARA Liner Sdn. Bhd.

“Besides, this operation involves the movement of large groups of students, especially for the eastern zone where 29 buses and 4 vans were used on 30 April 2020.

“The transports are provided not only for UMP students but also for other IPTs in Pahang as UMP is the operation centre for the operation of sending students back for the eastern zone,” she said.

Meanwhile, the PPPH Vehicle Supervisor, Mohd Azrul Naim Azme also shared his experience in handling the transports during the operation.

“In addition to arrange and schedule the drivers and trips, vehicle management must comply with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

“The seating capacity of all vehicles such as bus and van must be limited to ensure social distancing,” he said.

He also shared their experience of how they dealt with a problem of a malfunctioned bus during its trip to Muar, Johor.

“The bus broke down in Muadzam Shah around 2.30 am, and no bus was on standby because all were used for the operation.

“We contacted the driver at the nearby location that was on his way to Segamat, to help bring the students to Muar.

“Fortunately, the driver and liaison officer (LO) on the bus managed to calm the students.

“Alhamdulillah all of them safely reached their destination although it was a bit late,” he said.

A UMP driver, Muhamad Nazri Ismail who was also involved in the operation, regarded the drivers as part of the frontliners.
He had his own experience in his first trip to Gua Musang on a van.

“We had to travel using the federal route with no petrol station.

"Following the SOP, all students were sent to the nearby district office or district police headquarters (IPD) for the next trip to their homes.

“Upon reaching IPD Gua Musang, the police officers requested us to take the students to their homes because they were understaffed at the time and they were waiting for buses from other IPTs to arrive.

“With the consent given by the police, I continued the journey to send a UMP student to Kampung Jerek Dalam, Gua Musang, 50 km away from IPD Gua Musang.

“I was informed that this student comes from a needy family and his father only owns a motorbike and has to rent a car to pick him at IPD Gua Musang,” he said.

Apart from Gua Musang, he was tasked to send students back to the southern and central zones.

Having sahur and performing solat on the bus was also a new humbling experience during this hard time as no rest areas were open.

Now, after more than 40 days of being stranded on campus due to the MCO, students were relieved when they could return home to celebrate Eid with their families.

The movement in stages involved around 53,000 students including 1,260 UMP students who had been stranded on campus due to the MCO directive since 18 March 2020.

Students are advised to take care of themselves and their families and follow the instructions set by the government in the effort to break the chain of Covid-19 infection.

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