General

“We are fine, don’t worry” - UMP students in Germany

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A Business Engineering student from Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP), Batrisyia Elena Roslan, 22, who is continuing her study in Germany since 10 September last year, along with 11 other students, is now in a safe condition.

She asked her family and friends in Malaysia not to worry because the situation in her area is still under control.

Germany is among the five countries with the highest reported cases of Covid-19.

Elena is one of the 19 students who are enrolling the dual degree programme between UMP and Karlsruhe University of Applied Science (HsKA) and Hochschule Reutlingen University in Germany. After two years of studying at UMP, Elena is currently in Hochschule Reutlingen University for two years and is expected to return to Malaysia in December next year.
Along with her are Abdufotikh Akhmedov, Syukri Aiman Abdul Rahman dan Darshinii Manikam.
According to Elena, the lectures are done online.

“We are using online platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Webex

“The implementation of face-to-face lectures is still in discussion between the university and the state government of Baden-Württemberg,” she said.

She also said that during the beginning of the pandemic, she faced difficulties with buying bread.

“However, the basic necessities are still accessible. There is no lockdown here, but they are encouraged to stay at home.

“Most shops are still closed, and restaurants are only allowed for takeaway.

“The welfare of students is also looked after by the two universities. They always communicate with us here,” she said.

They also received face masks and food from UMP such as sardines and biscuits.

Currently, she and her friends take the advantage to learn German to prepare for the TestDaF exam this year and exercise individually in their rooms.

Elena also advised all students in Malaysia and in other countries to be patient with the spread of Covid-19 that hit many countries.

“Busy yourself with beneficial things and hone your talents,” she said.

She is a positive person, and she sees this situation as an opportunity for self-improvement, and she prayed that all will be eased and this difficult situation ends soon.

She also shared her first experience of fasting for 17 hours.

Meanwhile, a KL-hailed UMP alumnus, Syakiela Ahmad, 24, has lived in Germany for more than three years.

She had finished her UMP-Reutlingen University dual degree programme and currently enrolled in a pre-master programme in Robert Bosch GmBH, Stuttgart.

She must work for a year to gain industrial experience before pursuing her master's study.

Regarding the Covid-19 outbreak, the situation is still manageable, with only a maximum of two person can go out together, either the spouse or close partner.

She said that recreational activities are allowed in Stuttgart, except for camping.

"However, travelling is prohibited, and only a one-day trip without staying in the hotel is allowed.

"Shops are open, and there is no problem in getting basic supplies, but no mall opened.

"Besides, the German national borders are still closed to exit the country.

"Most workers are instructed to reduce working hours to 27 hours a week without pay from the standard duration of 35 hours a week," she said.

She is relieved when the pre-master programme is not affected by the regulation," she said while sharing her working experience in Germany.

Due to the spread of Covid-19, all employees are forced to practise Home Office (work from home) which is likely to be extended until May compared to only several companies that implement Home Office every Friday previously.

To pass her time, Syakiela can still bike around the lake and garden and do indoor gardening, as well as go for recreational activities in the mountains.

Coming into Ramadan, she does a lot of cooking at home such as rendang, curry and tom yum, as most of the raw ingredients are available, except for fish because only salmon is available here.

Sharing her experience, the Germans also provide free food for the homeless.

It is also easy for them to get medical treatment because of the appointment system, and not many people are seen in any clinic at any given time.

Germany recently took its first steps back towards normality by reopening small shops in several states after a one-month lockdown when the country has declared the Covid-19 "under control". However, public gathering and social distancing guidelines remain in effect.
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