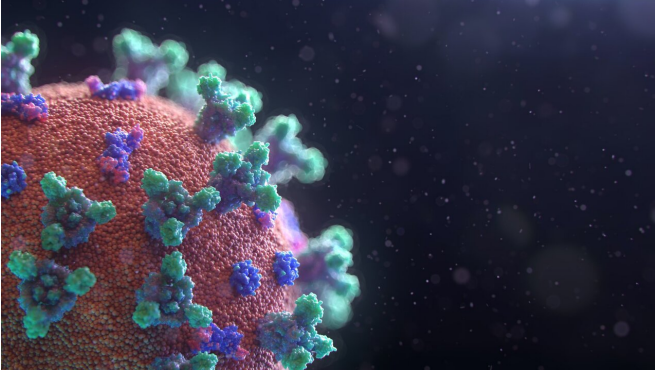


Malaysia tightens virus curbs ahead of Eid holiday

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Muslim-majority Malaysia will tighten coronavirus curbs across the whole country ahead of the Eid al-Fitr holiday as cases spiral, Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said Monday.

The move comes after authorities declared a slew of curbs limiting movement and social events in many places across Malaysia recently, including a partial lockdown in the capital.

The Southeast Asian nation has been battling a fresh COVID-19 outbreak since early this year, seeing thousands of new infections as the government declared a [state of emergency](#) to slow the spread of the virus.

Controls were slowly eased as [infection](#) rates fell, but case numbers regularly spiked past 4,000 a day as schools and special markets during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan were allowed to open.

The new curbs, Muhyiddin said, will kick in on Wednesday, a day before the country celebrates Eid al-Fitr, and remain until June 7.

While all sectors of the economy are allowed to carry on, [social events](#) such as feasts, house visits and wedding receptions will be banned during this time.

People will not be allowed to cross state or district borders, and not more than 50 will be allowed inside large mosques (or more than 20 for smaller ones) for special Eid prayers.

Schools and universities will be closed, except for those sitting for international exams, though childcare centres and kindergartens will be allowed to open.

Malaysia has seen a less severe outbreak compared to other countries, recording a total of more than 444,000 infections and 1,700 deaths since the beginning of the pandemic.

But the regular spike in infections, and the arrival of virus variants such as from South Africa and India, has worried health officials as the number of available beds and ventilators start to run out.

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