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Malaysia shuts vaccination center after 204 staff infected

By EILEEN NG yesterday



KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia shut down a mass vaccination center in its worst-hit state Tuesday after more than 200 medical staff and volunteers tested positive for the coronavirus.

The closure was the first of a vaccination center and came as the country's new confirmed infections breached five figures Tuesday, hitting a

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the testing of all 453 workers at the center after two volunteers were confirmed to have the virus. Khairy said the 204 whose results were positive had low viral loads, meaning the amount of virus in their bodies was small.

This could be because 88% or 400 of the workers have already been vaccinated, he said.

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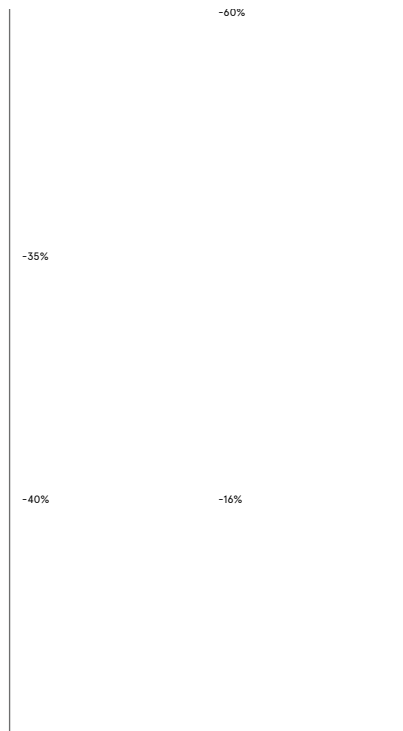
The center was shut for deep sanitization and all its workers are being isolated. Khairy said it will reopen Wednesday with a new team of medical workers.

He urged people who were vaccinated at the center since Friday to isolate themselves for 10 days and be tested if they develop symptoms. He declined to say how many people had visited the center since Friday. It has the capacity to deliver up to 6,000 shots a day.

“This is the first time we had to shut down a (vaccination center) because of positive cases but we acted fast. By shutting it down today and by taking corrective measures ... we hope the disruption is only one day and that this will not hamper the vaccination process,” Khairy said.

He said it would be safe to visit the center starting Wednesday for vaccinations.

Khairy said health measures at all other vaccination centers will be tightened,



The government has struggled to contain the pandemic, which has worsened despite a lockdown since June 1. Total confirmed cases have soared by 50% since June 1 to 855,949, while deaths have more than doubled to over 6,200.

Hospitals especially in Selangor have been overwhelmed, with some patients reportedly being treated on the floor due to a lack of beds, and corpses piling up in mortuaries.

Vaccinations have picked up, with 11% of the population now fully inoculated. At least a quarter of the country's 32 million people have received at least one dose of vaccine.

The daily vaccination rate surpassed 420,000 doses on Monday, the national Bernama news agency quoted Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin as saying,

He expressed confidence that the fast pace of vaccination would help stem the outbreak.



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