



WAKTU BERBUKA PUASA



Imsak
05:46 AM

Maghrib
19:20 PM

Rumah Bersih & Teratur, Ibadah Saat Ramadan
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unaware



Paying heed to state of mind during Covid-19



By [Dzulkifli Abdul Razak](#) - April 4, 2020 @ 12:01am



A policewoman stands in front of medical equipment storage facility 'Fiege' during a visit of the German Health Minister on April 3, 2020 in Apfelstaedt, eastern Germany. - AFP

IF there is one case of Covid-19 related death that needs to be highlighted, it would be that of Germany’s Finance Minister of Hesse state, Thomas Schaefer.

Allegedly he took his life after becoming “deeply worried” over how to cope with the economic fallout from the Covid-19.

Hesse being home to Germany’s financial capital, Frankfurt, where Schaefer, 54, was found dead near a railway track last week, raised many other questions. For starters, the death is not directly caused by the virus. Then, the Chancellor, Angelo Merkel, was quoted as saying the present

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the mind. The latter is most manifested among children of school-going age, as well as those eligible to be in the universities. In general, there is a feeling of loneliness and isolation.

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The induced sense of psychological inadequacy can lead to a state of “trauma” that breeds anxiety and frustration due the prolonged social isolation. Some described this as “a perfect storm to trigger mental health issues amidst the fight against the deadly Covid-19 pandemic.”

In attributing this, Universiti Malaya Specialist Centre consultant psychiatrist Assoc Prof Dr Amer Siddiq Amer Nordin told Bernama that “we definitely have seen a rise in those with mental illness reaching out for help. These individuals who were previously stable, have been destabilised due to the current situation” of the Movement Control Order (MCO), to flatten the curve of infection in the country.

Indeed, over the last decade, reportedly, the number of Malaysians experiencing poor mental health such as despondence, worry, tension and stress, tripled from 10.7 per cent in 1996 to 29.2 per cent in 2015. Therefore, the extended MCO for another two weeks, ending on April 14, must be seen as another “deeply worried” trend.

The well-known non-governmental agency, Befrienders Kuala Lumpur, reported an increase in the number of calls during the first phase of the MCO. In the first seven days, there was a 13 per cent increase in the number of calls received, where nine per cent of those calls were related to Covid-19 or the MCO.

In this light, the recent NST Leader on Managing Mental Health cited the Wuhan experience: “Public mental health interventions should be formally integrated into public health preparedness and emergency response plans.” And Covid-19 is definitely a case in point. Otherwise, the “deeply worried” phenomenon will rear its ugly head on multiple scenarios creating yet another social disruption.

The World Health Organisation reminded us that our ratio of psychiatrists to population should be 1:10,000, compared to the current 1:200,000. That is, 1.27 psychiatrists per 100,000 Malaysians which is dismal. As an analogy, the concern is not limited to only being physically clean and hygienic, but mentally too; not just about putting on a mask over the face, but the mind as well, in order to filter out the “fake” psychological



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