

No joy for many still hoping to leave

PETALING JAYA: Students stranded on various campuses around the country are getting impatient to know about the status of their applications to return home, following the unveiling of standard operating procedure (SOP) for interstate movement for varsity students.

With the movement control order (MCO) nearing its sixth week, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia student Mazlina Kamaruddin, 21, said she was still waiting to know the status of her application after submitting it last Friday.

The student from Alor Setar said they were asked to fill in a Google Form stating whether they intended to stay on campus, have their parents pick them up at the designated pick up points, or be ferried home by authorised personnel.

Mazlina added that she understood there were a lot of students waiting to go home, and that is why the university has not processed her application yet.

Last Thursday, Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin announced that students were allowed to return to their hometowns, provided such homes are in “green zones”.



Fumigation station: RBM Rescue Team members disinfecting buses at UKM before students are allowed to board them to return home. — Bernama

A parent who wanted to be known as Kartini said her daughter’s university told them “everyone will be sent home”, which seemingly contradicted the directive given by the Higher Education Ministry, which she believed applied only to students returning to green zones.

The Kuala Lumpur native said her daughter, studying in Sabah, was told students would be allowed to leave beginning tomorrow.

“My daughter and her friends are confused because there are no clear guidelines if they will be allowed to return,” said Kartini, who added that her home will be a much more conducive environment to study.

“But I understand why the government is insisting these students stay put where they are,” she said.

Meanwhile, some students, who began their journey home last night, said the SOP to apply to travel was easy, but the criteria they had to meet was tough.

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) student Muhammad Fahmi Saleh, 20, said they had to fill up a “student movement form” and keep three copies of it to be presented to the person in charge.

They also underwent temperature checks, and those with a cold, sore throat and shortness of breath

will not be allowed to travel, he said.

Instead, these students will be referred to the Health Ministry for further action, said Fahmi, who could not contain his excitement at being allowed to go home.

“I felt so depressed and cried a lot the first time the Prime Minister announced that we are not allowed to go back to our hometowns.

“I never imagined I would live alone in college because all my friends are already back in their hometowns,” he said, adding that his parents, Azizah Darus, 66, and Saleh Kasim, 74, were eagerly awaiting his arrival in Kulim.