

Iban community urged to take Covid-19 seriously

SIBU: Sarawak Dayak National Union (SDNU) Sibu branch chairman Chambai Lindong has urged the Iban community to take Covid-19 seriously.

He said he had noted that some members of the community were still ignorant about Covid-19, thinking that the virus is just like a normal flu and other non-infectious diseases.

"This should not happen because we must have the fear and concern for Covid-19. Once you have this fear and concern, you will be obliged to follow the standard operating procedures (SOPs) from the Health Ministry and Sarawak Disaster Management Committee and you will instil discipline in yourselves, families and the community," he said during a Facebook Live session hosted by Sibu Municipal Council (SMC) chairman Clarence Ting yesterday.

The moderator of the session was Universiti Putra Malaysia deputy dean for Graduate Studies, Prof Dr Jayum Jawan.

Other guests who joined the two-hour session were Ministry of Utilities permanent secretary Dato Alice Jawan, a political secretary to the chief minister Romeo Christopher Tegong, SMC councillor Augustine Merikan, Sarakup Indu Dayak Sarawak Sibu chairperson Angelyn Uchi Maseng, Catechist Michael Ili from Sacred Heart Church Sibu and Dr Lucy Sebli Seidelson from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak.

Besides urging the Iban community to take Covid-19 seriously, Chambai said the Iban community must not underestimate the SOPs in order to break the Covid-19 chain of infection in their respective area.

"During the last Movement Control Order (MCO), we heard about members of our community getting arrested for involvement in cockfighting activities in Sibujaya.

"There were also those in lockdown areas who let their young children play outside their house.

"As long as the virus is still with us, we have to follow the new norms and comply with the SOPs," he stressed.

On another matter, Chambai said the authorities should provide a detailed explanation on how a swab test for Covid-19 is done, as this will help alleviate fear and misperception among the people especially those who resisted to be tested.

"I received information that some flat residents at Sibujaya, which is currently placed under Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO), refused to take swab test when ordered by the authorities.

"Some even hid their family members when health workers went checking from door to door asking them to come down to take the test. It was because they feared the procedure would cause them pain.

"I believe this would not happen if they have a better understanding on the procedure," he said.