

First batch returns while last batch for KL leaves

Over 2,000 students yet to exit Labuan

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LABUAN: The first batch of Labuan students from Sabah returned to the island, Saturday. The chartered Malaysia Airlines flight carrying 65 who were in colleges and universities across Sabah, landed at Labuan Airport at 3.20pm.

Labuan Natural Disaster Management Committee Chairman Dr Fary Akmal Osman said the chartered flight was then used to transport the remaining 312 students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Labuan International Campus (UMSKAL) back to their hometowns in the peninsula.

"This trip marks the first batch of students we received from Sabah, and the final batch returning to West Malaysia from Labuan," she said.

Dr Fary revealed that they received one flight from Sabah, while two flights were needed to carry the 312 students back to the peninsula. The flights departed at 3.20pm and 4.05pm.

She said the 65 students from Sabah consist of 34 students from Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), 14 from Politeknik KK, four from UiTM Sabah, four

from Politeknik Sandakan, two from ILP KK, while the remaining seven were from private institutions across Sabah.

"Upon arrival, these students will undergo health screening and a swab test before they are released to their families waiting at a designated area at the airport.

"There, students together with their parents and family members will also undergo briefing for the students' home quarantine procedure," she said.

Dr Fary said beginning last week, the Committee had been conducting non-stop efforts to allow all students in Labuan to return to their hometowns, hopefully in time for the Hari Raya festivities.

"There are still some 2,076 students remaining in Labuan who have yet to return.

"We expect there will be another 60 trips within the coming days to ensure a larger number of students will be able to return home as soon as possible," she said.

"More than 1,000 matriculation students from Sabah will be travelling home

from Monday onwards via buses and ferries, while over 700 students from Sarawak will be flying home via MASwings flights and we are trying our best to reunite them with their families before Aidilfitri," she said.

She said the committee was still liaising with the Ministry of Higher Education on Labuan students who were still stranded at their respective campuses in Peninsula to return home.

"However, based on a statement issued by Senior Minister (Security Cluster) Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, there will be a flight sending Labuan students home soon, but we have yet to know the details," she said.

Fary said there were more than 200 students from Labuan in UMS Kota Kinabalu still waiting for their turn to return home.

She also reminded Labuan students currently stranded in their campuses outside Labuan that even though they were allowed to make their own arrangement, they still need to go through the committee.