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PM Muhyiddin joins world leaders in calling for global collaboration for COVID-19 vaccine

April 24, 2020 | News

KUALA LUMPUR, April 24 — Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin joined several world leaders tonight in calling for global collaboration to accelerate work in coming up with a vaccine for COVID-19 that is ravaging the world.

Speaking at the launch of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) accelerator hosted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) via live tele-conference, he offered Malaysia's full support for the landmark global collaboration.

He said the world has to work together to accelerate the development and production of tools and vaccines as well as to assure equitable global access to new COVID-19 essential health technologies.

"Malaysia is fully committed to being part of this time-bound effort and to take on the manufacturing of some of these tools and vaccines as they become available. And I urge leaders across the globe, donors, the private sector and the scientific community to support this important effort to win this war against COVID-19," he said in his remarks.

Saying that he is honored to join this important global call, the prime minister pointed out that COVID-19 "has impacted all of our lives and the global economy in ways never before experienced in living memory".

"The only way we can destroy this common invisible enemy of ours is through solidarity and cooperation," he said.

The live event, moderated by WHO director-general Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, also saw the participation of United Nations secretary-general Antonio Guterres and European Commission

president Ursula von der Leyen.

Other participants included French president Emmanuel Macron; South African president Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa; Spanish prime minister Pedro Sanchez Perez-Castejon and Italian prime minister Giuseppe Conte.

Muhyiddin, who is also chairman of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), stressed that never before has the clarion call to leave no one behind been more important than it is now.

"The world needs to come together to coordinate our efforts and expedite the development of effective tools to stop the spread of this disease.

"The role of the United Nations remains one of our strongest modalities to curb this pandemic in a manner that can ensure that the arsenals in this war that we are fighting can reach everyone, everywhere and in the shortest time possible" he said.

Tedros, in his opening address, said the initiative was launched to ensure that everyone would have access to the tools needed in order to defeat COVID-19.

"The ACT accelerator will bring the combined power of several organisations to work with speed and scale. Each of us is doing great work but we cannot work alone. We are coming together to work in a new way to identify challenges and solutions together.

"We are facing a common threat which we can only defeat with a common approach," he said.

According to Tedros, since January this year, WHO has been working with thousands of researchers from all over the world to accelerate the development of the COVID-19 vaccine.

"The world needs these tools and it needs them fast. Past experience has told us that even though tools are available it has not been equally available to all. We cannot allow that to happen," he said.

— BERNAMA

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