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General

50 student volunteers experience crisis management

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Kuantan, 14 May 2020 - A total of 50 students from Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) will undoubtedly remember their experience in volunteering for managing the welfare and safety and the operation of sending back home of the students who were stranded in the campus for more than 40 days following the Movement Control Order (MCO).

Mohd Fitri Zulkaffli from the Faculty of Computing, who is the President of the Students' Representative Council (MPP) 2019/2020 said that all the stranded students were happy to receive the news from the Defense Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob who announced that they can go back to their hometowns to observe Ramadan and celebrate Aidilfitri with their families.

“Therefore, MPP volunteers to help the university to coordinate the process to be systematic.

“The experience of being a volunteer is precious to me as I learn many great things while managing a disaster or crisis.

“I did not expect to be allowed to involve in the UMP Disaster Management Steering Committee Meeting in handling this issue,” he said.

He added that the role of volunteers is to collect and compile data of the on- and off-campus students and also as the relation officer to disseminate information.

Besides, they also assisted in preparing the documents for interstate travel and distributing food pack before the students started their journey.

He shared his experience in managing the process of sending back the students and the most challenging task was to ensure they remain calm and always adhere to the standard operating procedure (SOP).

“Initially, due to the excitement of going home, some students, whose their hometowns are declared under the red zone, are depressed when the permission of going back is only granted for green zones only.

“This is the time we are in the position to obtain updated and accurate information before disseminating it to the students to ensure their safety before sending them back,” he said.

He is now in his hometown in Perak, and he is satisfied and grateful when he completed the mission, and also happy to share the stories with his friends who have been in their respective homes.

“I hope those who have been in their hometowns can take advantage to observe Ramadan with their families and obey the instructions given by the government,” he said.

He expressed his gratitude to the university, especially the frontliners from the Student Affairs and Alumni Department (SAFFAD), Security Division, University Health Centre (PKU) and Department of Property Management & Development who had been working tirelessly to realize the mission of sending students back.

Meanwhile, his friend, Nur Shazwanie Zainurin from the Faculty of Chemical & Process Engineering Technology, the Services Exco for Gambang Off-Campus students shared her experience when she involved in managing the same operation since the first phase on 30 April 2020.

“This experience is going to be cherished because it involved a significant movement as UMP was appointed to coordinate the students from the eastern zone, and we handle students from other universities in updating data and ensuring smooth operation.

“Being a volunteer needs not only physical and mental strength but also emotional strength.

“I still remember a situation when I received complaints and questions from the students about the operation.

“But as a volunteer, we are trained to deal with them patiently and prudently. There were a group of

emotionally unstable students because they missed their family, and some of them reacted irrationally," she said.

However, the situation did not deter her from assisting the UMP frontliners in keeping the wellbeing and safety of the students during the MCO and CMCO.

The campus is now quiet as many students have returned to their hometowns.

She will also go back to her hometown in Pekan after completing the operation and hope that students can take care of themselves and pray that the Covid-19 pandemic ends soon.

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