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## Sarawak delivers 105 tonnes of liquid oxygen to West Kalimantan

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SARAWAK



*The Indonesian tankers loaded with the LOX containers from Sarawak in Tebedu CIQS which would carry the shipment all the way to Pontianak. – Photo by Chimon Upon*

TEBEDU (July 28): Sarawak has delivered seven containers of Liquid Oxygen (LOX) totalling 105 tonnes to neighbouring Indonesian province of West Kalimantan, said Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Datuk Amar Dr James Jemut Masing.

He said the shipment comprised three containers which were delivered across the border earlier on July 23 and 24, and the remaining four containers delivered during a symbolic ceremony today.

He explained the LOX were supplied to West Kalimantan following a request for help from Indonesia due to the spike of Covid-19 cases there.

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"The Indonesian government previously requested help in the form of food packs from Sarawak about a few months ago.

"And now due to a spike in cases, they asked us if we have spare oxygen. We say we have but we could not send that many as we have to reserve some for ourselves," he told the media at the Tebedu Customs, Immigration, Quarantine and Security (CIQS) Complex today after the handing over.



*Masing (right) and Indonesia army's Major General Muhammad Nur Rahmad bump fist after the symbolic handing over of the oxygen tanks. – Photo by Chimon Upon*

Masing, who is also Minister of Infrastructure and Port Development, assured Sarawakians there was enough reserve oxygen in the state should there be a spike in Covid-19 cases.

"We would like to help Indonesia in their time of need, but at the same time we must protect Sarawak just in case there is a spike of cases. We must have our own reserve," he said.

Earlier in his speech, Masing said a Kuching-based company Linde EOX Sdn Bhd is handling the shipment of the containers with their Indonesian counterparts.

He pointed out that based on conditions agreed by the Sarawak Disaster Management Committee (SDMC), the movement of the containers and the transporters from Kuching is limited up to the Tebedu CIQS.

He said other conditions include agreeing that the exchange point be between Tebedu CIQS and Entikong CIQS (across the border), and for full compliance of

standard operating procedures (SOPs) such as transporters must wear double masks, minimal physical contact, use of hand sanitisers and immediate sanitising of the tankers after use.

“Due to humanitarian grounds and close diplomatic bilateral ties, the Sarawak government has agreed to allow and assist in supplying and exporting the emergency oxygen supply to the West Kalimantan province, Indonesia.

“The transactions were done commercially whereby both governments are only facilitating the process,” Masing said.

Masing added that in his position as Chairman of Sarawak Border Control Committee, he had instructed the Secretariat headed by his ministry’s permanent secretary Datu Safri Zainuddin to assist with the delivery process in accordance with the stipulated procedures to ensure the smooth and safe shipment of the containers.

“As we are all aware, the Covid-19 pandemic saw our neighbouring country Indonesia recording a surge of cases until their oxygen supply is now at a critical level,” he said.

Also present at the ceremony were Education, Science and Technological Research Minister Datuk Amar Michael Manyin Jawong, who is Tebedu assemblyman, and senior government officers including Deputy State Secretary and SDMC deputy chairman Datu Ik Pahon Joyik.

The Indonesian delegation headed by the country’s XII/ Tanjungpura military command Commander Major General Muhammad Nur Rahmad was also present to witness the event.

When met by reporters later, Muhammad on behalf of the Indonesian government expressed their deepest appreciation to Sarawak for helping to deliver the oxygen tanks.

“As the Commander in charge of ensuring the safety of the shipment, we will closely guard the transporters to ensure the safe arrival in Pontianak,” he said.

Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg on July 22 had announced that the state would assist in the supply of oxygen to West Kalimantan, Indonesia due to shortage of oxygen faced amid the heightening Covid-19 pandemic there.

