

Campaign for good oral health deserves attention

MANY Malaysians still assume that losing teeth is a normal part of growing old. It isn't. Tooth loss may be common in elderly people, but it should not be accepted as an inevitable part of ageing.

This is why the Health Ministry's 6020 Campaign and the National Smile Journey 2026 initiative, launched by Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad last month, deserves wider public attention.

The campaign, which is part of the government's measures to address the challenges of an ageing population, aims to encourage Malaysians aged 60 and above to retain at least 20 functional natural teeth.

Based on the National Oral Health Survey of Adults 2020, only 34.3% of senior citizens have at least 20 natural teeth while 13.9% experience oral functional limitations that affect their quality of life," Dzulkefly said, "Health Ministry sets toothy green target for seniors by 2030" (*The Star*, April 27).

As a dentist specialising in the restoration and replacement of

missing or damaged teeth (prosthodontist), I often meet patients only after tooth loss has begun to affect their daily life.

Replacement can help, but preserving healthy natural teeth whenever possible should remain the priority.

Gum disease and dental decay often develop slowly, and early signs can be easy to overlook. Bleeding gums, persistent bad breath, food trapping, gum recession and teeth that feel loose should not be dismissed simply because there is no pain.

Regular dental check-ups, especially from the 40s and 50s onwards, can help detect problems before teeth become difficult to save. The public message is simple: brush properly, clean between the teeth, reduce sugar intake, avoid smoking, control diabetes and attend regular dental check-ups.

For many adults, a yearly dental visit is a practical starting point. Those with gum disease, multiple dental restorations, dentures, diabetes or other health conditions may need more fre-

quent reviews.

Some older adults may struggle to brush effectively, travel to clinics, manage dentures or recognise early dental problems. This is when family members or caregivers must offer assistance. When an elderly parent or grandparent begins to eat less, avoids certain foods, complains about loose dentures or becomes reluctant to smile, these may be signs that dental care is needed. Sometimes, the first step is simply to help them arrange a dental appointment.

Ensuring good oral health nationwide should not be the responsibility of public dental services alone, especially as Malaysia's population ages. This is where public-private collaboration becomes practical.

Universities, private dental practitioners, community organisations, care homes and industry partners can help by providing screening programmes, oral health education, denture care advice, referral pathways and community outreach.

A private clinic can conduct

local screening or denture reviews. A university can provide community education. Industry partners can supply outreach materials or organise awareness programmes.

Even small coordinated efforts can help the message reach people in practical and timely ways.

Oral healthcare should not be treated as separate from general healthcare. The ability to eat comfortably and live with confidence is part of staying well, just as nutrition, diabetes care and frailty prevention are part of healthy ageing.

The real value of the 6020 Campaign lies in reminding us that oral health support must start earlier – before pain and tooth loss – and must reach older adults where they live, work and age.

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MORE people in Selangor are seeking free mental health services through the state government's Sehat programme.

The two-pronged programme comprises Talian Sehat – a counselling hotline – and weekly community counselling sessions known as Hab Sehat.

Hab Sehat coordinator Dr Amiera Shakina Mohamad Nadzir said screening tests conducted on the 4,297 users, who registered via the Selangkah app for Hab Sehat services up to 2025, highlighted the strong need for such support.

Of the respondents, 12.5% said they were suffering from severe stress, 18.5% from intense anxiety while 6.5% had severe depression.

“The story is bigger than these numbers because not every mental health struggle shows up in official statistics.

“What we are seeing locally, especially through screening programmes and services like community counselling hubs, is an increase in people coming forward for assessment and support,” said Dr Amiera, a general practitioner specialising in psychiatry.

“People may look fine from the outside, but internally something else might be going on that needs attention.”

She highlighted several warning signs that could indicate someone was having mental health issues.

These include feeling tired, unmotivated and emotionally drained, she said.

Conversely, they may also feel anxious, physically restless like their mind cannot switch off.

“Another thing to look out for is someone who may have difficulty controlling emotions or reacts more strongly than usual,” said Dr Amiera.

She added that in cases of burnout, a person may feel like they were running on empty but still try to keep going.

“There are also those who have trouble concentrating, and feel lost and directionless.

Widening access to mental health services

Selangor government's Sehat programme provides free counselling to vulnerable groups



Women in the 20 to 40 age group comprise the largest number of respondents to Hab Sehat during its first phase. — Filepic

“Others facing mental health issues may choose to isolate or withdraw from social connections,” she said.

Dr Amiera stressed that mental health issues should not be confused with mental illness.

Not all mental health issues require medication, she said.

“Many cases can improve with counselling, therapy, lifestyle changes or psychosocial support.”

She cautioned against

labelling people with mental health issues as being “soft” or “typical of the strawberry generation.”

“This can lead to lack of support for those who are suffering from it, increased feelings of shame or isolation and potential worsening of mental health conditions,” she said.

Selangor Counselling Centre (PKS) coordinator and clinical psychologist Megat Syaiful Izzuddin Megat Mokhtar said



Dr Amiera: Many people can improve with counselling, therapy, lifestyle changes and psychosocial support.



Dr Aslina says 540 slots were booked under Hab Sehat during its first phase.

the provision of state-organised mental health support showed Selangor as a progressive state.

“Just as governments invest in preventing physical diseases, they must also invest in protecting mental well-being before problems become crises.

“Early support improves quality of life, strengthens productivity, reduces healthcare costs

Adult ADHD often confused with stress and burnout

➤ Symptoms include chronic forgetfulness, difficulty completing tasks and inconsistent concentration: Psychiatrist

■ BY T.C. KHOR
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PETALING JAYA: Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in adults is frequently mistaken for stress, burnout or poor time management, leaving many undiagnosed for years, said a psychiatrist.

Dr Shermaine Sim said rising awareness, improved screening tools, greater social media exposure and evolving understanding of ADHD have led more adults to seek assessments for long-standing

symptoms that were once dismissed as laziness, poor attitude or stress.

She emphasised that untreated ADHD could contribute to anxiety, depression, behavioural issues, workplace injuries and a higher risk of road crashes.

"ADHD has always been there. We just were not looking," she said, adding that the condition may also affect careers, financial management and interpersonal relationships.

However, she stressed that ADHD is not an illness but a condition that can be managed.

A 2023 review found that ADHD is less likely to be diagnosed in females, particularly in childhood, with many women only receiving diagnoses later in life after symptoms were mistaken for anxiety, depression or stress.

Sim, who is attached to The Kuaya, a private mental health centre in Kuala Lumpur, said adult ADHD remains underdiagnosed, adding that global data suggest only a small proportion of adults with the

condition are formally diagnosed.

A 2021 global review estimated that persistent adult ADHD affects 2.58% of adults worldwide while symptomatic adult ADHD affects 6.76%.

"Without a diagnosis, the general public assumes these adults are simply lazy and problematic."

Sim said many adults only seek help after years of struggling with disorganisation, missed deadlines, poor time management or repeated burnout without understanding the underlying cause.

She said ADHD in adults does not

always present as hyperactivity but may instead appear as chronic forgetfulness, difficulty completing tasks, impulsive decision-making and inconsistent concentration.

Sim added that many adults with ADHD remain highly capable academically and professionally, particularly in areas that strongly interest them.

"They may perform extremely well in high-pressure or stimulating environments while struggling with routine tasks, organisation or consistency," she said, stressing that those affected may also be at risk of substance use, disrupted sleep and low self-esteem.

She said the key distinction between ADHD and ordinary distraction or burnout lies in its persistence and pattern.

"Stress causes temporary difficulty concentrating. ADHD is there when things are calm.

"In burnout cases, impairment lifts with rest, but ADHD does not. ADHD symptoms affect multiple areas of life, including work,

relationships, finances and time management since childhood."

She said a proper ADHD assessment involves a detailed clinical interview, developmental history, standardised rating scales and screening for related conditions such as anxiety, depression, sleep disorders and thyroid issues.

Private assessments in Malaysia usually range between RM500 and RM1,500 or more, depending on the clinician and whether psychometric testing is included.

"Public hospital psychiatry clinics offer assessments at a fraction of that cost, but waiting times can be long."

Sim said medication is not always necessary and management may also include cognitive behavioural therapy, ADHD-specific coaching and lifestyle interventions such as sleep and exercise.

"The goal is not to change who

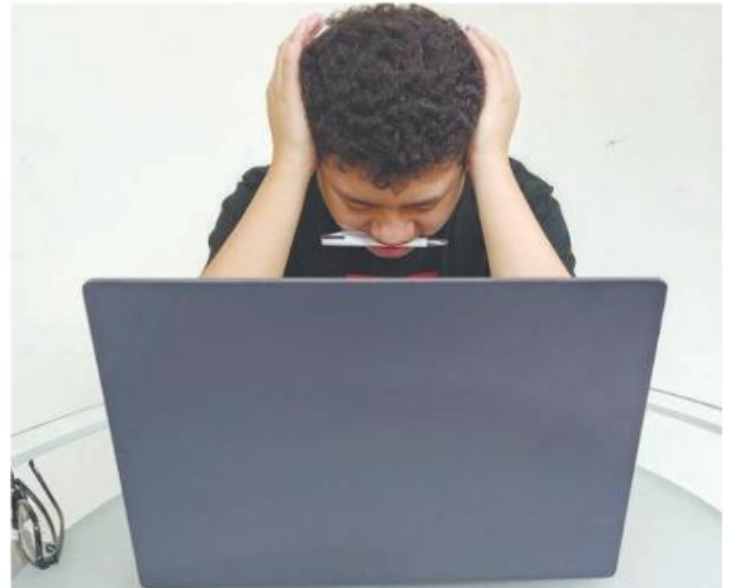
someone is. It is to reduce the friction between their brain and the life they want to live."

She said a diagnosis does not change a person's personality but helps adults better understand behavioural patterns that may have affected them for years.

"For many people, finally understanding why certain things have always felt harder can be extremely validating."

She added that many adults spend years developing coping mechanisms to hide symptoms and avoid being perceived as unreliable or lacking commitment.

"The accommodations that help are not complicated. They include flexible working arrangements, clear written instructions, avoiding long meetings and a culture in which people can ask for support without fear."



Sim said many adults only seek help after years of struggling with disorganisation, missed deadlines, poor time management or repeated burnout without understanding the underlying cause. – SYED AZAHAR SYED OSMAN/THE SUN

'Accept ruling to keep liquid nicotine on Poisons List'

➤ Court decision should be treated as turning point to rebuild vape regulatory framework, says Malaysian Pharmacists Society

■ BY FAIZ RUZMAN
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PETALING JAYA: The High Court decision to remove the 2023 exemption of liquid nicotine from the Poisons List should serve as a turning point to rebuild the country's vape regulatory framework rather than a ruling for the government to appeal, said the Malaysian Pharmacists Society (MPS).

Its president Amrahi Buang urged Putrajaya to fully accept the court findings and immediately place liquid

and gel nicotine used in vape and e-cigarette products back under the ambit of the Poisons Act.

He said the judgment goes beyond the legality of a single exemption order, exposing broader weaknesses in protecting public health when regulatory decisions are influenced by administrative or fiscal considerations.

"The court decision sends a clear signal that public health safeguards cannot simply be set aside for administrative convenience or fiscal objectives.

"From a healthcare perspective, nicotine remains a pharmacologically active and dependence-forming substance requiring proper regulatory oversight.

"It should not be treated as just another taxable consumer product," he said in a statement yesterday.

The former Universiti Malaya Medical Centre chief pharmacist said pharmacists had, for about two years, warned that removing liquid nicotine from poison control would create a regulatory vacuum, particularly as vape products became increasingly accessible to young users.

He added that the ruling should now be used as a catalyst to strengthen

enforcement under the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024 (Act 852), especially in curbing sales and marketing targeting youths.

"With Act 852 now in force, Malaysia must not lose momentum.

"MPS calls for firm enforcement, stronger action against youth-targeted vape sales and marketing, wider access to smoking and vape cessation services and meaningful involvement of healthcare professionals in future nicotine-control policy.

"The government should now take

immediate steps to ensure nicotine liquids and gels used in vape and e-cigarette products are placed back under proper poison control, where they rightfully belong," Amrahi said.

MPS is a member of the Malaysian Council for Tobacco Control, one of three NGOs involved in the judicial review alongside the Malaysian Green Lung Association and Voice of the Children.

On May 15, public health groups secured a major victory when the High Court ruled that the government acted unlawfully in March 2023 by removing vape-related liquid and gel nicotine from the Poisons List.

The move, made by then Health minister Datuk Seri Dr Zaliha Mustafa, had allowed the products to be taxed and sold under a separate regulatory framework.

Judge Datuk Zaliha Sulaiman ruled

that the decision was irrational and made without proper consultation with the Poisons Board, which had unanimously opposed the exemption.

The court also found that the exemption was largely driven by economic considerations following Budget 2023, when Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim proposed excise duties on e-cigarettes and nicotine vape liquids.

She further ruled that the exemption created a regulatory gap lasting one year and seven months until Act 852 came into force on Oct 1 last year.

The judge said consultation with the Poisons Board under the Poisons Act 1952 must be "conscious, meaningful, purposeful and effective" and not treated merely as a procedural formality after decisions had effectively been made.



The High Court ruling on vape liquid and gel containing nicotine is being seen as a turning point for stronger public health oversight. – ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

Plastic: Wrapped in hidden risks

MODERN life moves quickly and plastic has quietly become one of our constant companions. From mineral water bottles and takeaway food containers to coffee cups and frozen food packaging, plastic is everywhere. It is light, cheap, practical and convenient, which makes it difficult to avoid in daily life.

Yet, behind this convenience lies a question many of us rarely stop to ask: Are all plastics truly safe for food?

This is not a new issue. Health authorities and researchers have long warned about the risks associated with certain plastics used in food packaging.

Despite this, public awareness remains uneven. Some risks continue to be overlooked simply because the effects are not immediately visible.

One example that still occurs today is the practice of heating cooking oil together with its thin plastic packaging. In such situations, the plastic is exposed to high temperatures and may release chemicals into the oil.

Physically, the oil may still look normal and safe to use but chemical contamination can still occur. The concern becomes even greater when that oil is later used to prepare hot food for customers.

In recent years, scientists and health experts have paid increasing attention to chemicals commonly associated with plastics, particularly phthalates and Bisphenol A, more widely known as BPA.

Phthalates are chemicals used to make plastics softer, more flexible and more durable. They are commonly found in various plastic products, including some forms of food packaging. BPA, meanwhile, is used in hard and transparent plastics such as certain water bottles, food storage containers and the inner lining of food and beverage cans.

These substances are not "instant poisons" that immediately cause harm the moment plastic is used. In fact, they play useful roles in manufacturing.

The problem arises when consumers are unaware of how plastics should be properly used, leading to careless

practices in everyday life.

What concerns scientists is the ability of these chemicals to migrate from packaging into food through a process known as chemical migration.

Chemical migration occurs when substances from packaging materials transfer into food that comes into contact with them. The transfer may happen in very small amounts but the risk increases depending on how the plastic is used.

Certain everyday habits can increase the likelihood of phthalates and BPA entering food. These include pouring hot food or drinks directly into plastic containers, heating food in plastic containers inside microwave ovens, storing oily or fatty foods in plastic packaging and repeatedly using containers that are already damaged or warped.

In simple terms, the higher the temperature, the longer the storage period and the oilier the food, the greater the potential for chemicals to migrate into what we eat.

One common misconception is that a plastic container is safe as long as it still looks clean. Many consumers continue using old plastic containers for food storage simply because they appear intact.

In reality, not all plastics are designed to withstand high heat or repeated reheating.

This misunderstanding is deeply embedded in daily routines. People pour hot soup or curry into thin plastic containers without a second thought.

Others reheat meals in containers that were never meant for microwave use, often without checking whether the packaging carries a microwave-safe label.

These actions may seem trivial but repeated exposure over many years could gradually increase contact with chemicals that do not belong in food.

International studies have linked prolonged exposure to phthalates and BPA with hormone disruption, reproductive system effects and other potential health risks.

Although daily exposure levels are

"Many consumers continue using old plastic containers for food storage simply because they appear intact. In reality, not all plastics are designed to withstand high heat or repeated reheating."



Health authorities and researchers have long warned about the risks associated with certain plastics used in food packaging. - BERNAMAPIC

often low, consistently reducing unnecessary exposure remains an important preventive step.

Still, discussions about these chemicals should not be seen as an attempt to frighten consumers or encourage people to abandon plastic altogether.

Plastic remains an important part of modern life. The real goal is awareness. Consumers should understand that convenience also comes with responsibility, especially when it involves food safety.

A few simple habits can help reduce the risks associated with chemical migration. Hot food should not be poured directly into thin or questionable plastic containers. Glass, ceramic or stainless steel containers are safer choices for hot meals.

Consumers should look for labels such as "food grade" or "microwave safe" before using plastic containers for heating. Reducing the use of single-use plastics where possible is also a sensible step.

Even something as simple as avoiding prolonged exposure of plastic bottles to heat inside parked cars or under direct sunlight can make a difference. These may seem like small adjustments but over time, small habits shape long-term health outcomes.

Health is influenced not only by what we eat but also by how food is stored, heated and packaged. Choosing the right food container may appear insignificant, yet such decisions can quietly affect our well-being over the years.

Being a wise consumer does not mean rejecting modern technology or convenience. Plastic undoubtedly makes life easier. But informed consumers understand that not every convenience should be accepted without thought.

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'Climate crisis is health emergency'

Experts seek WHO's declaration

ON June 11 last year, the World Health Organisation (WHO) made a bold move of launching the Pan-European Commission on Climate and Health (PECCH) in Reykjavik, Iceland. The commission of 11 members, which includes former climate and health ministers, is headed by former prime minister of Iceland, Katrín Jacobsdóttir. The idea is for it to fight deadly heat, air pollution with real health-sector solutions. It now has a bold message for the WHO: declare the climate crisis a public health emergency or face the death of millions around the world. The call is made in time for the WHO's World Health Assembly today. The PECCH isn't being alarmist. It describes the world we live in thus in a press statement published on the WHO's website: "In the last decade the global temperature increase has accelerated significantly, and the pan-European region is the fastest-heating region on earth, with temperatures rising at twice the global average rate." Such acceleration, the commission contends, makes dramatic shifts in key earth systems more likely to occur. The window to prevent irreversible harm is narrowing, it warned.

Badging its recommendations to the WHO as a "Call to Action", the PECCH wants the world body to seize the moment to declare the climate crisis as a health emergency as it did during the Covid-19 pandemic.

They must reduce emissions. One way to do it is for them to stop subsidising fossil fuels.

There is a reason for the call. An emergency of such a nature would result in a global coordinated response as it happened during the pandemic. PECCH concedes that the climate crisis isn't a pandemic but it is still a public health emergency that threatens human health and survival.

The call is for the world to take immediate and comprehensive measures. Otherwise we have to live with life-changing illnesses and millions more deaths.

What can countries do? They must reduce emissions. One way to do it is for them to stop subsidising fossil fuels. Europe alone spends €444 billion per year for oil and gas production, according to media reports, with a few countries in the continent said to be spending more on subsidies than on public health. Make no mistake, European countries aren't the only ones subsidising fossil fuels. It is a global disease. Another way is to steer away from fossil fuel to renewable energy. To call for an immediate halt to fossil fuel production may not be practical but the window to make the switch is narrowing. The world was supposed to go net-zero by 2050, but that seems to be hope against hope as some leaders think climate change to be a hoax. PECCH is also calling on countries to make their healthcare more resilient as climate change brings with it life-changing illnesses.

We think PECCH's call is right and timely. On May 20, the United Nations General Assembly is meeting to vote on the resolution to operationalise the International Court of Justice's climate justice ruling last year. If the resolution is passed, cutting fossil fuel emissions will become a legal responsibility for governments.

THE World Health Organisation has issued a strong warning over the rapid global expansion of nicotine pouch products, decrying the tobacco industry's aggressive marketing tactics to hook young people.

Nicotine pouches, which are small sachets placed between the gum and lip that release nicotine through the lining of the mouth, are rapidly reshaping the global tobacco and nicotine market, the WHO said in a fresh report.

"Governments are seeing the use of these products spread quickly, especially among adolescents and young people who are being aggressively targeted by deceptive tactics," said Etienne Krug, head of WHO's health determinants, promotion and prevention department.

The products, which contain nicotine and typically also sweet flavouring, "are engineered for addiction", he warned in a statement.

Often marketed as "modern", "discreet" and "tobacco free", nicotine pouches are spreading across countries so fast that regulations are failing to keep pace, WHO warned in its first report on the products.

US\$7-BILLION MARKET

Sales of nicotine pouches had reached over 23 billion units in 2024

WHO slams booming nicotine pouch sales

— an increase of over 50 per cent from the previous year, WHO said.

And the global nicotine pouch market was worth nearly US\$7 billion last year, it added, with sales highest and swelling in North America.

One popular nicotine pouch brand was on sale in around 9,000 US retail shops in 2017 and was now stocked in over 150,000 shops by 2024, it pointed out.

Outside the US, the pouches are most popular in European countries, like Germany, Poland and Sweden, but are forecast to be fast-growing in a range of other countries, including Pakistan.

"This is not simply a market trend; it's a rapidly evolving public health challenge," Vinayak Prasad, who heads WHO's Tobacco Free Initiative, told reporters.

WHO emphasised that nicotine itself was "highly addictive" and was particularly harmful for young people whose brains are still developing.

Nicotine exposure during adolescence can affect brain development, including impacts on attention and learning, and increases the likelihood of long-term dependence and use, it said.

The report highlighted well-documented health risks associated with nicotine use, including for cardiovascular risk and mental health.

CANDY FLAVOURS

It slammed widespread industry tactics to appeal to young people, including sleek packaging and flavours like bubble gum and gummy bears.

Influencer marketing and heavy social media promotion was also used, as was sponsorship of concerts and sporting events like Formula 1, it said.

And it decried messaging promoting the possibility of "discreet" use and avoiding detection by parents and teachers, with slogans including: "Forget the rules",

and "Anytime, anywhere", alongside images of places where smoking is typically banned, like restaurants and public transport.

Prasad slammed efforts by the companies to present nicotine pouches

as safer than traditional cigarettes, and even as tools to help smokers quit.

"If these products were truly intended primarily as smoking cessation tools for adult smokers, why are they being marketed with candy flavours?" he asked.

"Nicotine pouches are not risk-free products and should not be marketed in ways that create a new generation of addiction."

Jorge Alday, head of global tobacco industry watchdog STOP, agreed, describing nicotine pouches as "little seeds of an epidemic that the tobacco companies are planting everywhere".

In a statement sent to AFP, he warned that "nicotine pouch marketing today looks a lot like what we saw 10 years ago before the youth vaping epidemic took off".

WHO urged countries to step up regulations to address the issue.

Currently, around 160 countries have no specific regulations for nicotine pouches.

Only 16 ban their sale, while 32 others have some regulations, it said.

The report called for, among other things, bans or strong restrictions on flavours in nicotine pouches, and bans on advertising, promotion and sponsorship for the products.

It also urged strong age-verification and retail controls, clear health warnings and plain packaging, and steep taxes to reduce affordability of the products.



Langkah terbaik kembalikan semula nikotin dalam Akta Racun - MCTC

SHAH ALAM - Keputusan Mahkamah Tinggi Kuala Lumpur yang memihak kepada pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO) dalam isu pengecualian cecair dan gel vape mengandungi nikotin daripada senarai bahan terkawal di bawah Akta Racun 1952 disifatkan kemenangan besar kepada kesihatan rakyat negara ini.

Presiden Majlis Kawalan Tembakau Malaysia (MCTC), Dr M Murallitharan berkata, keputusan itu membuktikan bantahan pihaknya terhadap tindakan kerajaan sebelum ini mempunyai asas kukuh dari sudut kesihatan awam dan perundangan.

Menurutnya, perjuangan membawa isu itu ke mahkamah bukan sesuatu yang mudah kerana melibatkan semakan kehakiman terhadap kerajaan dan menteri yang sedang memegang jawatan ketika itu.

"Kita bersyukur dan berterima kasih. Ini adalah satu isu yang kita perjuangkan bermatlamat kerana ia adalah isu masyarakat. Tidak dinafikan, kita menerima tekanan sangat tinggi supaya menarik balik semakan kehakiman tersebut kerana ada pihak menganggap tindakan itu seperti tidak menyokong kerajaan.

"Tetapi kami mengambil pendirian keputusan mengecualikan nikotin daripada Akta Racun satu kesilapan besar yang tidak boleh dikompromi. Jadi, kita harap kerajaan mengambil iktibar daripada keputusan penghakiman ini.

"Malah, kami juga ingin menjelaskan tindakan yang diambil ini bukan bermotifkan politik atau memalukan mana-mana pihak tetapi ber-



MURALLITHARAN

paksikan kesihatan rakyat. Langkah terbaik yang boleh kita lakukan ialah dengan memulangkan semula nikotin ke dalam akta racun," katanya kepada *Sinar Harian*.

Mahkamah Tinggi Kuala Lumpur pada Jumaat memutuskan keputusan Menteri Kesihatan dan kerajaan mengecualikan cecair serta gel vape mengandungi nikotin daripada senarai bahan terkawal di bawah Akta Racun 1952 sebagai tidak rasional.

Hakim, Datuk Aliza Sulaiman yang kini Hakim Mahkamah Rayuan membuat keputusan itu selepas mendapati pengecualian dimasukkan dalam Perintah Racun (Pindaan Senarai Racun) 2023 dibuat tanpa rundingan sewajarnya dengan Lembaga Racun.

Katanya, keputusan mengecualikan cecair dan gel nikotin bagi rokok elektronik daripada kawalan Akta Racun dibuat lebih menjurus kepada faktor ekonomi susulan cadangan pengananan duti eksais terhadap produk itu.

Pada 14 Oktober 2023, MCTC, Pertubuhan Malaysian Green Lung (MGLA) dan Voice of the Children (VOC) sebagai pemohon mendapat kebenaran daripada mahkamah untuk memulakan semakan kehakiman terhadap Menteri Kesihatan dan kerajaan sebagai responden pertama dan kedua.

Mengulas lanjut, Murallitharan berkata, MCTC akan membuat advokasi untuk membetulkan semula kesalahan yang dibuat oleh kerajaan berhubung perkara tersebut bagi melindungi kanak-kanak dan golongan belia daripada bahaya ketagihan nikotin.

Menurutnya, ketika ini juga tiada alasan untuk Jemaah Menteri tidak menyokong usaha untuk mengembalikan semula nikotin dalam Akta Racun kerana jelas wujud kelompongan dalam keputusan yang diambil sebelum ini.

"Tiada alasan untuk Jemaah Menteri tidak menyokong untuk senaraikan semula nikotin ke dalam Akta Racun. Isu kehakiman jelas. Sepatutnya pulangkan balik nikotin dalam Akta Racun," katanya.

Dalam masa sama, beliau menggesa kerajaan supaya tidak memfailkan rayuan terhadap keputusan mahkamah kerana tindakan sedemikian boleh memberi persepsi bahawa aspek keuntungan ekonomi lebih diutamakan berbanding kesihatan rakyat.

"Kita harap kerajaan melihat keputusan ini sebagai peluang untuk membetulkan kesilapan lalu dan memperkukuhkan dasar kawalan vape demi melindungi generasi muda daripada ketagihan nikotin," katanya.

Menurutnya, nikotin sepatutnya kekal sebagai bahan terkawal di bawah Akta Racun kerana ia merupakan bahan ketagihan yang hanya wajar dibekalkan melalui saluran perubatan seperti klinik, farmasi dan pengamal kesihatan bertauliah.

"Apabila nikotin dikeluarkan daripada Akta Racun sebelum ini, vape bernikotin boleh dijual secara terbuka dan keadaan itu menyebabkan akses kepada golongan bawah umur menjadi semakin mudah.

"Kalau nikotin dimasukkan semula di bawah kawalan Akta Racun, ia hanya boleh diperoleh melalui preskripsi atau pemantauan profesional kesihatan," ujarnya.

TBI 'wabak senyap' lepas kemalangan

Menjadi penyumbang 70% kes kecemasan kecederaan kepala

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Kuala Lumpur

Kecederaan otak traumatik (TBI) dianggap 'wabak senyap' apabila statistik hospital menunjukkan kemalangan jalan raya menjadi penyumbang utama melebihi 70 peratus kes kecemasan kecederaan kepala yang serius di negara ini.

Situasi itu menyebabkan banyak katil di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU) dan wad pembedahan saraf dipenuhi mangsa kemalangan jalan raya yang mengalami kecederaan otak serius, terutama golongan muda berusia antara 15 hingga 40 tahun.

Pensyarah dan Pakar Neurosurgery Hospital Canselor Tuanku Muhriz (HCTM), Profesor Madya Datuk Dr Ainul Syahrilfazli Jaafar berkata, keadaan itu amat membimbangkan ke-

rana kebanyakan mangsa berada pada usia produktif dan menjadi aset penting ekonomi negara.

Katanya, TBI berlaku apabila terdapat impak fizikal atau daya mekanikal luaran yang menyebabkan gangguan terhadap fungsi normal otak.

"Ia bukan sekadar luka luaran di kepala, tetapi kecederaan pada tisu saraf di dalam tengkorak yang boleh memberi kesan kekal sepanjang hayat.

"TBI boleh berlaku akibat hentakan terus pada kepala, pergerakan kepala yang terlalu laju dan berhenti mengejut atau objek tajam yang menembusi tengkorak," katanya.

Menurutnya, antara kecederaan yang kerap ditemui di unit kecemasan adalah gegar otak (*concussion*), lebam otak (*contusion*), gumpalan darah antara otak dan

tengkorak serta *diffuse axonal injury* (DAI).

"Kesan jangka panjang TBI bukan sahaja membatikan lumpuh atau sawan, malah turut menjejaskan daya ingatan, fokus serta emosi pesakit," katanya.

Dr Ainul Syahrilfazli berkata, penunggang dan pembonceng motosikal kekal menjadi kumpulan paling ramai mengalami TBI di Malaysia.

Katanya, keadaan itu disebabkan mereka tidak mempunyai perlindungan seperti kerangka besi pada kereta selain faktor penggunaan topi keledar yang tidak mengikut piawaian atau tidak dipakai dengan betul.

"Kelajuan tinggi juga me-

ningkatkan daya hentakan terhadap otak dan menyebabkan risiko kecederaan serius menjadi lebih tinggi," katanya.

Jelasnya, pemakaian topi keledar yang betul mampu mengurangkan risiko kecederaan otak sebanyak 60 hingga 70 peratus.

"Penggunaan tali pinggang keledar dan beg udara dalam kenderaan juga terbukti membantu mengurangkan impak kecederaan kepala ketika kemalangan," katanya.

Beliau berharap masyarakat dapat melakukan anjakan budaya dalam aspek keselamatan jalan raya dengan lebih menghargai fungsi otak sebagai organ paling penting dan sukar dipulihkan jika rosak.

"Otak tiada alat ganti. Sebab itu jangan pakai topi keledar hanya untuk mengelak saman, tetapi pakailah untuk melindungi nyawa dan pastikan ia diikat kem-

mas. "Ingat, kemalangan berlaku dalam sesaat, tetapi kesannya ditanggung seumur hidup," katanya.

"TBI boleh berlaku akibat hentakan terus pada kepala, pergerakan kepala yang terlalu laju dan berhenti mengejut atau objek tajam yang menembusi tengkorak"

Pensyarah dan Pakar Neurosurgery HCTM,
Dr Ainul Syahrilfazli



59.2 peratus pekerja Malaysia obesiti

Kuala Lumpur: Tahap kesihatan golongan pekerja di Malaysia mendedahkan realiti membimbangkan apabila sebanyak 59.2 peratus pekerja yang disaring didapati mengalami masalah berat badan berlebihan atau obesiti.

Dapatan itu diperoleh berdasarkan analisis Program Saringan Kesihatan (HSP) oleh Pertubuhan Keselamatan Sosial (PERKESO) bagi tempoh 2023 hingga 2025.

Timbalan Menteri Sumber Manusia, Datuk Khairul Firdaus Akbar Khan berkata, jumlah itu satu angka yang cukup tinggi dan tidak boleh dipandang ringan.

"Dapatan itu turut menunjukkan 19 peratus daripada mereka menghidap diabetes, manakala 17.45 peratus pekerja mempunyai tekanan darah tinggi.

"Malah, 59.24 peratus yang menjalani saringan didapati mempunyai ma-

salah kolesterol tinggi dengan profil risiko ini berada dalam kalangan pekerja berusia 40 hingga 59 tahun," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika berucap merasmikan program PERKESO Run and Ride 2026 sempena Hari Pekerja 2026 di Dataran Wawasan, Putrajaya, semalam.

Turut hadir, Timbalan Ketua Setiausaha (Dasar dan Antarabangsa) KESUMA, Dr Mohd Shaharin Umar; Ketua Setiausaha Kementerian Belia dan Sukan, Datuk Rahimi Ismail; Timbalan Ketua Setiausaha (Operasi) Kementerian Sumber Manusia (KESUMA), Sutekno Ahmad Belon; Pengerusi Lembaga PERKESO, Datuk Seri Subahan Kamal dan Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Kumpulan PERKESO, Datuk Seri Dr Mo-

hammed Azman Aziz Mohammed.

Menurutnya, masyarakat perlu sedar bahawa memasuki fasa usia sebelum persaraan adalah tempoh produktif tetapi pada masa sama, ia juga tempoh kritikal risiko penyakit tidak berjangkit (NCD).

"Malah, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) juga mendedahkan hanya 14.7 peratus warga emas di Malaysia ketika ini mencapai tahap penuaan sejahtera," katanya.

Khairul turut menyuarakan kebimbangan berkenaan kes penyakit kanser yang kekal sebagai punca kematian ketiga tertinggi dalam kalangan rakyat Malaysia yang semakin kerap berlaku dalam kalangan golongan muda.

Justeru itu, beliau menyarankan supaya kesedaran mengenai bahaya

NCD tidak dipandang ringan dengan menjadikan momentum kehadiran pada program anjuran PERKESO sebagai langkah intervensi untuk membudayakan hidup sihat dan pemakanan seimbang.

"Saya bangga dengan momentum positif dipamerkan melalui kadar penyertaan hari ini apabila kelompok peserta berusia 40 hingga 50-an mewakili hampir 30 peratus daripada keseluruhan peserta PERKESO Run and Ride 2026.

"Ini perkembangan yang amat baik dan saya harap semua pekerja tanpa mengira peringkat umur akan terus membudayakan corak hidup sihat.

"Ini kerana aspek kesihatan pekerja adalah penentu produktiviti kita, malah secara tidak langsung mempengaruhi kelangsungan sosioekonomi," katanya.