

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

DBKL arah kedai runcit dikendali warga asing tutup serta-merta

Kuala Lumpur: Sebuah kedai runcit diarahkan tutup selepas didapati dikendalikan warga asing di Pusat Bandar Utara, Selayang, dekat sini, semalam.

Datuk Bandar Kuala Lumpur, Datuk Nor Hisham Ahmad Dahlan, berkata kedai runcit yang mempunyai lesen perniagaan itu dipercayai milik rakyat tempatan tetapi disewakan kepada warga asing.

Justeru, beliau berkata, kedai runcit itu diarahkan tutup serta-merta mengikut Seksyen 101(1)(v) Akta Kerajaan Tempatan 1976.

"Pemantauan oleh tujuh anggota penguat kuasa kira-kira jam 10 pagi tadi (semalam) mendapati operasi kedai runcit terbabit dijalankan oleh warga Myanmar.

"Pemeriksaan lanjut mendapati kedai runcit itu memiliki lesen perniagaan, namun disyaki disewakan kepada warga asing.

"Ketika pemeriksaan dan penutupan dilakukan, pemilik kedai itu tiada di lokasi.

"Selain diarahkan tutup serta-merta, Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL) turut mengeluarkan notis kompaun mengikut Seksyen 20(1)(b) Undang-Undang Kecil (UUK) Pelesenan Tred, Perniagaan dan Perindustrian (Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur) 2016," katanya kepada **BH**, semalam.

Mei lalu, Nor Hisham dilaporkan berkata, DBKL akan menguatkuasakan UUK sedia ada bagi memastikan tiada warga asing terbabit dalam sektor tred, perniagaan dan industri serta penjaan.

Langkah penguatkuasaan itu bertujuan mengatasi isu kebajikan warga asing dalam sektor berkenaan, yang memberi impak tidak baik kepada peniaga tempatan, selain mencemarkan imej bandar raya ini.

Sementara itu, di **Shah Alam**, Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Selangor (JKNS) mengarahkan 19 premis makanan di Kuala Langat dan Hulu Selangor ditutup serta-merta pada Khamis lalu.

Pengarahnya, Datuk Dr Sha'ari Ngadiman, berkata arahan berkenaan dikeluarkan selepas premis berkenaan didapati beroperasi dalam keadaan kotor dan tidak mematuhi prosedur operasi standard (SOP) Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan Pemulihan (PK-PP).

Beliau berkata, 11 premis ditutup mengikut Seksyen 11 Akta Makanan 1983, manakala lapan lagi mengikut Seksyen 18 (1)(f) Akta Pencegahan dan Pengawalan Penyakit Berjangkit 1988.

Penularan COVID-19



Kompleks perniagaan Pekan Rabu yang sebelum ini sesak dengan pengunjung kelihatan lengang kesan penularan COVID-19 di Kedah, semalam.

Kluster baharu Sala jangkiti 4 sekeluarga

Angka harian meningkat dengan 23 penularan tempatan, 3 kes import

Oleh **Noor Atiqah Sulaiman**
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Putrajaya: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mengesan satu lagi kluster baharu dinamakan Kluster Sala yang sudah menjangkiti empat individu sekeluarga di Yan, Kedah.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata kes pertama kluster itu dikesan ketika saringan pesakit Jangkitan Pernafasan Akut Teruk (SARI) di Hospital Sultanah Bahiyah, Kedah, Khamis lalu.

"Kes pertama terbabit (kes 9,148) ialah seorang lelaki warga tempatan. Susulan itu, kita mengadakan aktiviti pengesanan kes secara aktif dan saringan rapat, semalam (kelmarin) dan hari ini (semalam).

"Tiga kes dilaporkan hari ini

(semalam) pula adalah ahli keluarga kepada kes 9,148.

"Setakat jam 12 tengah hari tadi (semalam), 80 individu sudah disaring dengan 76 masih menunggu keputusan," katanya dalam kenyataannya, semalam.

Berdasarkan paparan dalam Facebook Dr Noor Hisham, Kluster Sala membabitkan kes 9,148 yang berusia 58 tahun, isteri (52 tahun), anak perempuan (30 tahun) dan cucu perempuan (setahun).

Secara keseluruhan, angka harian jangkitan baharu COVID-19 terus mencatat peningkatan dengan 26 kes dilaporkan, semalam, meliputi 23 penularan tempatan dan tiga kes import.

Ia sekali gus menjadikan bilangan kumulatif mencecah 9,175 jangkitan dengan jumlah kes aktif dan kebolehjangkitan ialah 219 di negara ini.



Kes pertama kluster Sala dikesan ketika saringan pesakit Jangkitan Pernafasan Akut Teruk (SARI) di Hospital Sultanah Bahiyah, Kedah, Khamis lalu.

Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah,
Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan

Memperincikan lanjut, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, penularan tempatan membabitkan rakyat Malaysia meliputi 12 kes daripada Kluster Tawar, Kluster Sala (tiga) dan Kluster Muda (satu).

Selain itu, masing-masing satu kes saringan tempat kerja dan saringan kontak rapat di Kuala Lumpur, serta masing-masing satu kes saringan prapembedahan di Johor dan Perlis.

Tiga lagi penularan tempatan membabitkan bukan warganegara, iaitu dua kes saringan tahanan adalah pendatang asing tanpa izin di Negeri Sembilan dan satu saringan tempat kerja di Kuala Lumpur.

"Tiga kes import pula membabitkan dua rakyat Malaysia dan seorang warga asing di Kuala Lumpur. Mereka mendapat jangkitan dari Austria, Amerika Syarikat dan Vietnam," katanya.

Dalam pada itu, enam pesakit sedang dirawat di Unit Rawatan Rapi dengan seorang memerlukan bantuan pernafasan.

Tiga pesakit dilaporkan pulih, setakat jam 12 tengah hari semalam, menjadikan jumlah kumulatifnya 8,831 kes (96.25 peratus) dan tiada pertambahan kematian akibat COVID-19 di negara ini dengan bilangan kekal 125 kes (1.36 peratus).

Mengulas perkembangan Kluster Tawar pula, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, 33 individu sudah dijangkiti di Kedah dan Pulau Pinang, setakat ini.

"Seramai 657 individu sudah disaring dalam kluster ini, iaitu 520 di Kedah (30 positif, 472 negatif dan 18 masih menunggu keputusan).

"Selain itu, 129 di Pulau Pinang (tiga positif, 119 negatif dan tujuh masih menunggu keputusan) serta lapan di Perak masih menunggu keputusan," katanya.

Bagi Kluster Muda, 133 individu disaring dengan tiga dikesan positif, 27 negatif dan 103 masih menunggu keputusan, sementara pengesanan kes secara aktif serta saringan kontak rapat masih diteruskan.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 5
RUANGAN : NEGARA

Dua kanak-kanak mangsa terbaharu Kluster Tawar

Oleh NOR IDAYU BOSRO

PUTRAJAYA - Dua orang kanak-kanak berusia dua dan enam tahun merupakan antara lima kes positif membabitkan generasi kedua jangkitan Covid-19 di Kluster Tawar sekali gus menjadikan jumlah keseluruhan kes dalam kluster berkenaan sebanyak 39 kes.

Selain kanak-kanak terbabit, ibu mangsa berusia 34 tahun juga adalah mangsa terbaharu Covid-19 selepas dipercayai mendapat jangkitan daripada bapa mereka yang merupakan

kontak hospital kepada kes indeks (ke-9,113).

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr. Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, terdapat pertambahan enam kes baharu di Kluster Tawar dengan lima daripadanya adalah generasi kedua.

"Ini menjadikan jumlah kes dikesan positif Covid-19 bagi kluster ini sebanyak 39 kes iaitu 34 kes di Kedah dan empat di Pulau Pinang.

"Sehingga semalam, seramai 899 orang telah disaring dan 54 masih menunggu keputusan, manakala 803 didapati negatif,"

katanya dalam kenyataan akhbar di sini semalam.

Noor Hisham berkata, kes penularan tempatan yang membabitkan warganegara turut dikesan hasil saringan prapembedahan di Hospital Queen Elizabeth, Sabah.

"Kes penularan tempatan dalam kalangan bukan warganegara pula dikesan di Kuala Lumpur yang merupakan saringan rawak di tempat kerja oleh Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah (PKD) membabitkan dua pekerja kedai makan," katanya.

Berhubung kes import, Noor

Hisham berkata, sebanyak 16 kes dilaporkan dengan membabitkan 11 warganegara.

Noor Hisham berkata, Kluster Sala dan Kluster Muda tidak melaporkan kes baharu semalam.

"Tiga lagi kluster ditamatkan iaitu Jeti Kuching di Sarawak serta PUI Ramnad dan Restoran Kuala Lumpur di ibu negara.

"Kluster Jeti Kuching sebelum ini merekodkan dua kes, manakala Ramnad (tiga kes) dan Restoran Kuala Lumpur (dua kes). Tiada kes kematian dilaporkan di ketiga-tiga kluster," katanya.

AKHBAR : KOSMO AHAD

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NEGARA

Kluster Sala jangkiti satu keluarga termasuk bayi berusia setahun

Lagi kluster baharu di Kedah

Oleh NOR IDAYU BOSRO

PUTRAJAYA - Seorang bayi berusia setahun merupakan antara tiga kes positif Covid-19 membabitkan Kluster Sala yang dikesan di Yan, Kedah semalam sekaligus menjadikan jumlah keseluruhan kes dalam negara mencecah 9,175 dengan 219 kes aktif.

Selain bayi itu, dua ahli keluarga lain yang juga wanita berumur 52 dan 30 tahun termasuk kes pertama kluster tersebut membabitkan seorang peniaga berusia 58 tahun yang juga datuk mangsa adalah kes terbaharu wabak Covid-19 di Kedah.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr. Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, lelaki itu dikesan positif pada 13 Ogos lalu melalui sistem surveilan klinikal Jangkitan Pernafasan Akut Teruk (SARI) di Hospital Sultanah Bahiyah, Kedah.

Menurutnya, sehingga semalam, 80 kontak rapat mangsa disaring dengan empat dikesan positif, manakala 76 lagi sedang menunggu keputusan.

"Punca jangkitan masih dalam siasatan dan pengesanan kes secara aktif sedang diteruskan.

"Langkah-langkah pencegahan seperti proses pembersihan dan nyah kuman telah dijalankan di lokasi-lokasi yang dikenal pasti," katanya dalam satu kenya-



PEKAN Guar Chempedak di daerah Yan yang didakwa mempunyai kaitan dengan Kluster Sala.

taan di sini semalam.

Setakat ini empat kluster dikesan di Kedah membabitkan Kluster Sala, Tawar, Muda dan Sivagangga.

Noor Hisham berkata, daripada 26 kes baharu, 12 kes dikesan di Kluster Tawar termasuk dua kes di Pulau Pinang, dan satu di Kluster Muda.

Tiga kanak-kanak berusia 8, 11 dan 13 tahun yang merupakan cucu saudara kes pertama iaitu kes ke-9113 merupakan antara

kes baharu yang dikesan semalam dalam Kluster Tawar.

Beliau berkata, seramai 657 individu di tiga negeri iaitu Kedah, Pulau Pinang dan Perak telah disaring dalam Kluster Tawar setakat ini.

"Daripada jumlah itu, 33 dikesan positif dengan 30 kes di Kedah, tiga lagi di Pulau Pinang manakala tiada kes di Perak. Sebanyak 591 dikesan negatif manakala 33 lagi menunggu keputusan.

"Selain itu, seramai 133 individu disaring dalam Kluster Muda dengan tiga kes dikesan positif, 27 individu negatif dan baki 103 individu masih menunggu keputusan," katanya.

Sementara itu, baki tujuh kes tempatan membabitkan empat warganegara dikesan di Kuala Lumpur dengan dua kes adalah saringan di tempat kerja dan saringan kontak rapat kes positif Covid-19 ke-8,688.

"Dua lagi kes dikesan di Johor



Angka Terkini Kes Covid-19 Di Malaysia sehingga semalam

Jumlah	
• Kes baharu	26
Import: 3 Tempatan: 23	
• Pulih	3
• Kematian	0
• Masih dirawat	219
• Jumlah kes sembuh	8,831
• Jumlah Kematian	125
Jumlah kes keseluruhan	9,175

dan Perlis dengan masing-masing satu kes membabitkan saringan prapembedahan.

"Tiga kes lain adalah dalam kalangan bukan warganegara yang dikesan di Negeri Sembilan hasil saringan tahanan pendatang asing tanpa izin serta satu kes saringan tempat kerja di Kuala Lumpur," ujarnya.

Noor Hisham berkata, tiga kes import yang dikesan adalah dari Austria, Amerika Syarikat dan Vietnam melibatkan dua warganegara dan satu bukan warganegara.

"Sehingga kini terdapat enam kes positif dirawat di Unit Rawatan Rapi dengan satu memerlukan bantuan pernafasan.

"Tiada pertambahan kes kematian dan jumlah kumulatif kes kematian kekal sebanyak 125 kes," katanya.

AKHBAR : MINGGUAN MALAYSIA

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

HARIAN	Kes baharu	Mati	Sembuh	Aktif	STATISTIK KES COVID-19	KESELURUHAN	Jumlah Keseluruhan	Jumlah Sembuh	Jumlah kematian
	26 23 Tempatan 3 Import	0	3	215			9,175	8,831	125

Kluster baharu Sala catat 4 kes

Oleh AQILAH MIOR
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PUTRAJAYA: Satu lagi kluster baharu dikenali sebagai kluster Sala dikenal pasti melibatkan empat ahli keluarga di daerah Yan, Kedah yang sah dijangkiti Covid-19.

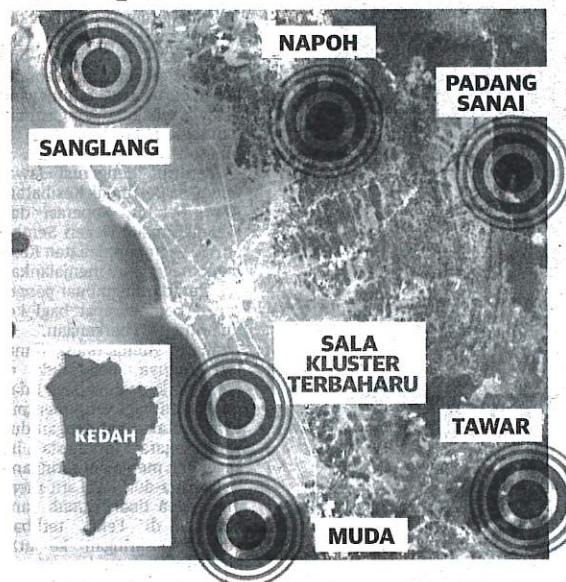
Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, kes pertama kluster itu iaitu kes ke-9,148 merupakan lelaki warga tempatan berusia 58 tahun, dikesan positif pada 13 Ogos lalu melalui sistem surveilans klinikal Jangkitan Pernafasan Akut Teruk (SARI) di Hospital Sultanah Bahiyah, Alor Setar.

Katanya, aktiviti pengesanan kes secara aktif dan saringan kontak rapat dijalankan kelmarin dan kes-kes dikesan positif semalam.

"Ketiga-tiga kes yang dilaporkan merupakan ahli keluarga kepada kes pertama yang berusia antara 52 hingga setahun melibatkan isteri, anak dan cucu," katanya dalam laporan harian perkembangan terkini Covid-19 di sini semalam.

Tambah Dr. Noor Hisham,

Lokasi penularan Covid-19 di Kedah



sebanyak 80 kontak rapat individu terbabit telah disaring. "Daripada jumlah ini, seba-

nyak empat kes dikesan positif manakala 76 individu masih menunggu keputusan.

"Kesemua kes bagi kluster ini adalah warganegara dan punca jangkitan masih di dalam siasatan," ujarnya.

Beliau memberitahu, pengesanan kes secara aktif sedang diteruskan dan langkah-langkah pencegahan serta pembendungan jangkitan seperti proses pembersihan dan nyah kuman telah dijalankan di lokasi-lokasi yang dikenal pasti.

Dalam perkembangan sama, Dr. Noor Hisham berkata, terdapat 12 kes baharu dilaporkan bagi Kluster Tawar semalam dengan 10 kes di Kedah dan dua kes di Pulau Pinang sementara satu kes baharu bagi Kluster Muda.

"Ini menjadikan jumlah kes dikesan positif Covid-19 bagi Kluster Tawar sebanyak 33 kes dan tiga kes bagi Kluster Muda.

"Sehingga 15 Ogos pukul 12 tengah hari, seramai 657 individu disaring dalam kluster Tawar dan 133 orang bagi kluster Muda.

"Pengesanan kes secara aktif dan saringan kontak rapat masih diteruskan bagi kluster ini dan situasi semasa akan dimaklumkan dari semasa ke semasa," ujarnya.

AKHBAR : SINAR AHAD

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : MEMERANGI WABAK COVID-19

Kluster Sala di Kedah

26 kes baharu direkodkan

Kluster baharu dikesan di daerah Yan melibatkan seorang lelaki tempatan



Lelaki kes ke-9,148 dikesan positif pada 13 Ogos lalu melalui sistem survelan klinikal Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) di Hospital Sultanah Bahiyah, Kedah.

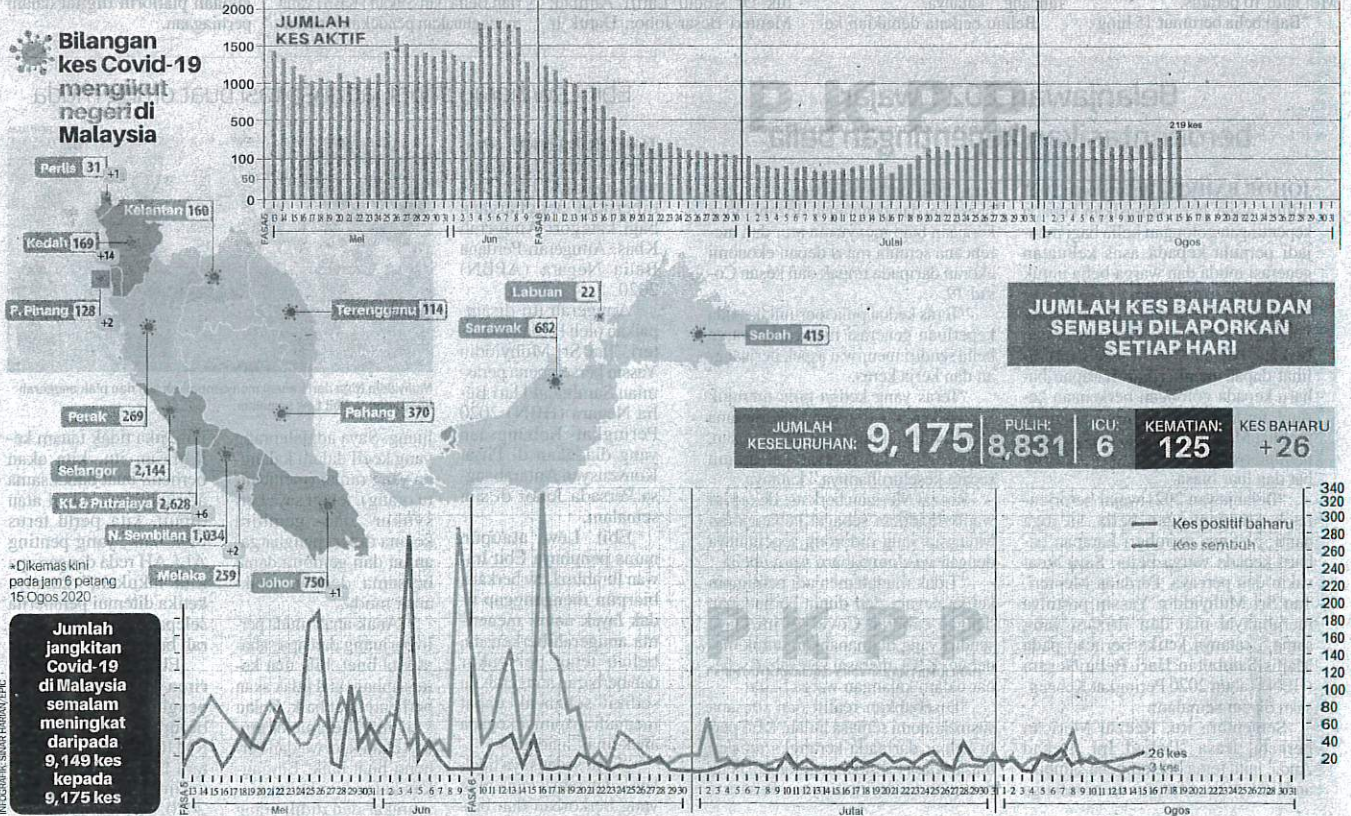
KUALA LUMPUR
 Satu lagi kluster baharu dikenali sebagai Kluster Sala dikesan di daerah Yan, Kedah melibatkan seorang lelaki warganegara sebagai kes pertama kluster tersebut. Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, lelaki berkenaan (kes ke-9,148) dikesan positif pada 13 Ogos melalui sistem survelan klinikal Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) di Hospital Sultanah Bahiyah, Kedah. "Susulan itu, aktiviti pengesanan kes secara aktif dan saringan kontak rapat dijalankan pada 14 Ogos dan kes dikesan positif pada 15 Ogos. Ketiga-tiga kes dilaporkan hari ini (semalam) merupakan ahli keluarga kepada kes pertama (kes ke-9,148)," katanya dalam kenyataan akhbar perkembangan Covid-19 semalam.

Menurutnya, ini menjadikan jumlah kes positif Covid-19 bagi kluster berkenaan sebanyak 33 kes. "Sehingga 12 tengah hari ini (semalam), 657 individu disaring dalam kluster ini," katanya. Sementara itu, mengenai Kluster Muda di Kedah beliau berkata, terdapat satu kes baharu dilaporkan semalam. - *Bernama*

KUALA LUMPUR - Kes positif Covid-19 semakin meningkat apabila 26 kes baharu dilaporkan semalam membabitkan 23 kes penularan tempatan dan selebihnya kes import. Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, ia menjadikan jumlah kes positif sebanyak 9,175 kes serta jumlah kes aktif dengan kebolehan-jangkitan sebanyak 219 kes. Beliau menjelaskan, daripada 23 kes penularan tempatan, sebanyak 20 kes melibatkan warganegara manakala tiga lagi bukan warganegara. "Bagi kes penularan dalam negara dalam kalangan warga Malaysia di Kedah, tiga kes terdiri daripada kluster baharu iaitu Kluster Sala, 10 kes Kluster Tawar dan satu kes Kluster Muda. Di

Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur pula, satu kes saringan di tempat kerja dan satu kes saringan kontak rapat kepada kes positif iaitu kes ke-8,688. "Di Pulau Pinang terdapat dua kes saringan Kluster Tawar kerana merupakan kontak rapat kepada kes positif (kes ke-9,129) manakala di Johor dan Perlis pula masing-masing mencatatkan satu kes daripada saringan pra pembedahan," katanya. Kes jangkitan tempatan yang melibatkan bukan warganegara pula adalah dua kes saringan tahanan yang merupakan pendatang tanpa izin di Negeri Sembilan dan satu kes saringan di tempat kerja di Kuala Lumpur. Tiada pertambahan kes kematian berkaitan Covid-19 dilaporkan semalam. - *Bernama*

SITUASI TERKINI KES COVID-19 DI MALAYSIA SETAKAT SEMALAM



INFOGRAFIK: SINAR HARIAN/EPIC

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NEWS/NATION

26 INFECTIONS YESTERDAY

NEW LOCAL CASES MOSTLY IN KEDAH

New Sala cluster originates from man who has respiratory infection

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THE Health Ministry recorded 26 new Covid-19 cases up to noon yesterday, bringing the overall tally to 9,175 and active cases at 219.

Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said the ministry also detected a new cluster, named "Sala" in Yan, Kedah.

In a statement, he said of the total cases recorded yesterday, 23 were locally transmitted while the remaining three were imported.

"The three imported cases were

recorded in Kuala Lumpur, involving a foreigner returning from the United States and two Malaysians from Vietnam and Austria.

"Of the 23 local cases, 20 are Malaysians and three are foreigners."

On the local transmissions, Dr Noor Hisham said 14 were recorded in Kedah — three from the new Sala cluster, 10 from the Tawar cluster in Baling and one from the new Muda cluster.

Other cases, he said, were recorded in Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Johor and Perlis.

One Kuala Lumpur case was detected during a workplace screening and another was a close contact of Case 8,688.

In Penang, two people were detected from the Tawar cluster as they were close contacts of Case 9,113. In Johor and Perlis, one case each was detected after pre-surgical screening of patients.

He said the three cases involving foreigners were from Negeri Sembilan involving two illegal



A fishmonger waiting for customers at his empty stall in Tawar, near Baling, Kedah, yesterday. A total of 10 new Covid-19 cases have been recorded from the Tawar cluster yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

immigrants and the Kuala Lumpur worker.

He said three more patients had recovered and were discharged from hospitals yesterday, bringing the current rate of recoveries to 8,831 (96.3 per cent of the total cases).

"Six patients are being treated in the intensive care unit and one is on ventilator support. No fatalities from the virus were reported to the Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre (CPRC) up to noon today (yesterday), keeping the death toll at 125 (1.36 per cent)."

On the Sala cluster in Yan, Kedah, Dr Noor Hisham said the index case — Case 9,148 — involved a local man who tested positive for Covid-19 on Aug 13

after suffering severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) during a clinical surveillance at Sultanah Bahiyah Hospital.

"Active case detection and screening of close contacts were conducted on Aug 14, and positive cases were detected today (yesterday). All three cases were family members of the index case.

"Up until Aug 15, 80 of his close contacts were screened and of these, four positive cases were detected and 76 are awaiting results. All those involved in this cluster are Malaysians. Active case detection is ongoing and sanitising activities are being carried out at the locations identified.

"The source of infection is still under investigation."

On the Tawar cluster, Dr Noor Hisham said 12 new cases were reported yesterday, comprising the 10 cases in Kedah and two in Penang. This, he said, brings the total Covid-19 positive cases in the Tawar cluster to 33.

"Up until Aug 15, a total of 657 individuals have been screened — 520 in Kedah (20 positive, 472 negative and 18 awaiting results), 129 in Penang (three positive, 119 negative and seven awaiting results) and eight in Perak (eight awaiting results, no positive cases detected)."

On the Muda cluster, he said 133 people had been screened up until Aug 15, three of whom returned positive and 27 negative, while the remaining 103 individuals were awaiting results.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 3

RUANGAN : NATION

New cluster identified in Kedah

By JUSTIN ZACK
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PETALING JAYA: The Sala cluster has been identified as a new one in Kedah, one of the three clusters with cases recorded in the state.

The Health Ministry said the country recorded 26 new cases of Covid-19, with three recoveries as of yesterday.

"The first case of the Sala cluster (case 9148) is in the Yan district in Kedah where a Malaysian man was identified as Covid-19 positive on Aug 13, via a clinical surveillance

system for Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) at the Sultanah Bahiyah Hospital there.

"Active case and close contact detections were conducted on Aug 14 with positive cases found on Aug 15," said Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah in a statement yesterday.

He added the three cases in the cluster yesterday were all family relatives of the index case.

A total of 80 close contacts of the patient have been screened with four testing positive. The remaining 76 are still awaiting their results.

Meanwhile, 12 more cases have been reported from the Tawar cluster, with two cases in Penang and 10 in Kedah.

"The amount of cases linked to this cluster is now at 33. As many as 657 individuals have been screened.

"From that, 30 positive cases were found in Kedah and three in Penang. In Perak, eight have been screened with their results still pending," he said.

One case was also recorded from the Muda cluster as well.

Of the 26 cases reported yesterday, three were imported.

"They are from Austria, the United States of America and Vietnam," he said.

No additional fatalities have been recorded, keeping the number of fatal cases at 125.

AKHBAR : SUNDAY STAR

MUKA SURAT : 14

RUANGAN : FOCUS

STORIES By LOH FOON FONG
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SEVERAL Health Ministers have come and gone in the last decade but the issue of too many medical graduates being produced – more than the healthcare system can cope with for training and providing tenure – has continued to snowball.

Yet, despite all the hue and cry, there has been a limited effort by the government as a whole to nip the issue at source.

The glut of medical graduates has resulted in a long waiting time for housemanship slots and subsequently, a shortage of permanent medical officer (MO) positions. The issue is compounded by the lack of new permanent posts since 2015, hence limiting trainee doctors' chances of becoming a specialist.

There are uncertainties at every level, resulting in many anxious doctors.

But who can blame them?

Imagine spending six years of one's life studying medicine and once graduated, waiting for almost another year for entry into housemanship. Then, even if you make it through these eight to nine years, there is no guarantee that you will get a permanent MO post, which is needed for specialisation.

In Malaysia, an MO can apply for an area of specialisation after his or her first year in the post but if the doctor does not get a permanent post and instead gets appointed to a two-year contract service, it will not be enough for the MO to complete a specialisation course, which needs at least four years of relevant work experience and another one or two years for gazettement to be recognised as a specialist.

Malaysian Medical Association's (MMA) Section concerning House Officers, Medical Officers and Specialists (Schomos) has asked the government for an extended service contract of 10 years to allow for specialist training and gazettement.

In an interview, its chairman Dr Kevin Ng says that's because it takes two years as an MO for pre-training, four to seven years for specialist training, one to two years for specialist post gazettement and registration with the National Specialist Register.

It is followed by five years compulsory service as specialist and another three to five years to train as a subspecialist, he adds.

Funding for specialisation is another issue.

In a written reply to a question raised in Parliament by Tanga Batu MP Rusnah Aluai on the job security and welfare of contract doctors, Health Minister Dr Adham Baba said that contract doctors would have to pay for their post-graduate specialty training themselves as they are not eligible for the Federal Training Scholarship for specialisation.

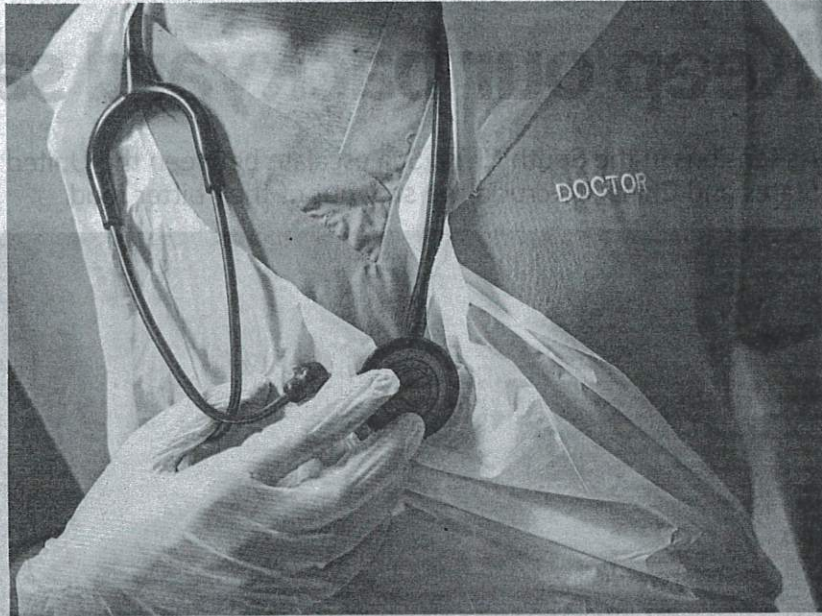
In response, Malaysian Medics International (MMI) president Dr Sean Thum had said that even if doctors were able to pay for their own specialisation training, they may not be able to complete it as their contract tenure falls short of the required training period.

"We urge the government to consider longer contract tenures to allow completion of postgraduate specialty training for junior doctors," he said.

Meanwhile, there is also another idea being thrown around – to offer permanent posts to MOs, but instead of providing them with a pension, they should be offered Employees Provident Fund (EPF) membership to reduce the burden of cost on the government and allow for more doctors to be

Uncertain future for some Malaysian doctors

It's time for the government to commit to solving the contract doctor issue.



A long journey: Doctors need longer contracts to be able to train in an area of specialisation.
– Bloomberg/Filepic

trained.

That's because with the longer contract that the Schomos proposed, the doctors will still not be entitled to study leave and scholarship.

Multi-pronged approach

In an interview, Dr Adham says the ministry is looking into the proposal to extend the years of contract for the MOs to serve in the Health Ministry.

He says the proposal was being refined at the ministry level, together with the Public Service Department, Public Service Commission and the chief secretary to the government.

"The drafting of the recommendation is still ongoing. This is to allow for contract MOs to pursue an area of specialisation on their own if they are interested," Dr Adham tells *Sunday Star*.

He also says that the dilemma of contract doctors not being able to do specialisation must be explored by the government as a whole.

He asks that he be given time to come up with recommendations to solve some of the issues.

"I have been in office for just over 150 days and we have to first address the Covid-19 challenges," says Dr Adham.

He says there are plans to increase the capacity to train housemen – the ministry had added two training hospitals last year, Hospital Langkawi and Hospital Keningau.

"Medical graduates may also want to do housemanship overseas," he says.

Currently, there are 49 housemanship training hospitals with 12,153 slots available, he says. Around 6,139 medical graduates were appointed on contract basis to start housemanship last year,

says Dr Adham. (All housemen have been appointed on contract basis since December 2016.)

"This is higher than the 4,140 medical graduates appointed to permanent posts in 2015," he tells *Sunday Star*.

Dr Adham adds the ministry is also increasing the capacity for more specialists to be produced – the Federal Training Scholarships will be increased from 1,100 slots in 2019 to 1,226 slots this year for permanent doctors to specialise.

There are more than 8,000 specialists in the Health Ministry currently, he says.

Universiti Malaya medical faculty dean Datuk Prof Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman believes Malaysia is short of specialists in almost all specialty areas, and specific subspecialty areas.

"The needs within each speciality is evolving rapidly with new fields of study being created and explored. The shift towards more lifestyle related diseases will also see a shift in the types of specialities needed in the future," she says.

While more specialists are needed the emphasis should also be given to preventive care, hence, enhancing the number and quality of primary care specialists is paramount, she says.

Dr Adeeba says the role of other medical workers such as nurse specialists and allied health professionals – physiotherapists, occupational therapists, medical social workers should also be strengthened.

"We need to shift care into the community through better preventative care and community-based care to reduce the need for more acute tertiary care hospitals," she says.

However, the limited places for training at public institutions

remain an issue, she says.

As she explains, in order to become a specialist, a doctor will need to train for a minimum of four years in a Health Ministry or Higher Education Ministry's (MOHE) university hospital.

"And herein lies the problem. There are no new posts being created to take in these graduates; hence, they are unable to work as medical officers which would have allowed them to be trained as specialists," she says.

Current doctors who have completed their housemanship will have to wait for MO posts to be vacated before they can be absorbed by the system.

Conceding that it is not an easy problem to solve given the financial constraints, especially in this time of Covid-19, Dr Adeeba says the authorities must try and find short, mid and long-term solutions for it.

The different ministries, for one, seem to be working in silos and there is a lack of cooperation between them to solve these critical issues.

It is crucial that the various stakeholders come together to discuss and solve the issues, she stresses.

"It involves more than the MOHE. There is an urgent need for the Health Ministry, universities and the Higher Education Ministry, Public Service Department, Finance Ministry and other medical scholarships providers – state and federal – to meet and chart the future for medical training in the country.

"We need to clearly define the five-year and 10-year targets for expansion of healthcare services and with that, human resource development needs to match the expansions," she says.

From this, the implementation



Dr Adham: The ministry is looking into extending the years of contract for the MOs to serve in the Health Ministry.

of the Medical School Aptitude Test to improve the calibre and limit the number of candidates eligible to enter training should be carried out as the first check and the implementation of the medical licensing examination should be done as the second, before the graduates register with the Malaysian Medical Council, she says.

"The implementation of a common Medical Licensing examination will ensure a level playing field for all candidates and also serve as a benchmark for universities providing training for medical students," she says.

Dr Adeeba points out that it costs too much – RM350,000 to RM500,000 to produce a local medical graduate – not to allow them to enter into housemanship at a reasonable time and to have an uncertain future with the MO position and the ability to undergo specialist training in jeopardy.

"As a result of these uncertainties, some may choose to leave medicine altogether after graduation or go overseas. This tantamount to a huge waste of financial and human resources," she says.

Asked if the government should cap the number of medical graduates that are going into our healthcare system, she says planning should be done to match the population growth per year.

"It is estimated that we need about 2,000 new doctors to provide enough access to healthcare in the future," she says, adding that the number of posts created will be determined by the actual number and type of specialists needed for the Health Ministry, universities and the private sector.

"A comprehensive human resources for health planning and projection is needed," she says.

"With the completion of the National Postgraduate Training Curriculum project for many of the speciality disciplines, training can potentially occur at many more hospitals than is currently occurring."

"This will immediately create more specialist training positions and opportunities, provided the hospital and trainers meet the criteria stipulated in the curriculum," she says.