

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 5

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Harga bahan mentah hasilkan ubat-ubatan dijangka meningkat

Kos logistik, ringgit tak stabil beri kesan bekalan dalam negara

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Kuala Lumpur: Harga bahan mentah bagi penghasilan ubat-ubatan untuk bekalan dalam negara dijangka naik berikutan ketidakstabilan ringgit serta peningkatan kos logistik.

Pengarah Urusan Kumpulan Duopharma Biotech Bhd (Duopharma Biotech), Leonard Ariff Abdul Shatar, berkata tidak dapat

dipastikan sama ada kenaikan harga bahan mentah itu akan mendorong kenaikan harga ubat-ubatan.

"Pembekal menjangkakan harga bahan mentah untuk penghasilan ubat naik berikutan ketidakstabilan mata wang ringgit serta peningkatan kos logistik," katanya kepada BH, semalam.

Beliau menjelaskan, situasi harga ubat berikutan kenaikan harga bahan mentah itu bergantung pada ketetapan kerajaan.

"Kita akan ikut ketetapan oleh kerajaan untuk harga ubat-ubatan di negara ini. Sebarang semakan (harga dan masa kenaikan), kita akan ikut pekeliling kerajaan," katanya.

Mengenai bekalan ubat-ubatan sedia ada, beliau berkata, syarikat berkenaan memastikan bekalan bahan mentah simpanannya boleh menampung pengeluaran

ubat-ubatan bagi tempoh tiga hingga empat bulan.

Katanya, pihak syarikat memang sentiasa memastikan bahan mentah yang diperolehi dari luar negara berupaya menampung stok tambahan bagi memastikan bekalan ubat-ubatan keluaran Duopharma Biotech seperti ubat batuk, selesema, sakit mata, vitamin serta makanan tambahan, tidak terganggu.

"Meskipun tidak dapat mengelak kenaikan harga bahan mentah, kami tidak berdepan masalah dalam perolehan bahan itu dan kami juga mempunyai simpanan tambahan bagi menampung operasi harian. Kami mempunyai cukup bekalan ubat dan bahan mentah.

"Pihak syarikat memastikan bahan mentah yang kami ada dapat menampung tiga hingga empat bulan pembuatan ubat-uba-

tan. Justeru, kami tidak menghadapi masalah membekalkan ke hospital, klinik kerajaan, swasta serta farmasi," katanya.

Duopharma Biotech membekalkan pelbagai ubat-ubatan, antaranya untuk rawatan diabetes, kanser, buah pinggang dan sakit jantung.

Firma itu juga menghasilkan ubat-ubatan am seperti ubat batuk, selesema, sakit mata, vitamin serta makanan tambahan.

Kelmarin, ringgit ditutup rendah berbanding dolar Amerika Syarikat (AS) bagi hari ketiga berturut-turut berikutan penurunan harga minyak dan penguksuhan dolar AS.

Pada jam 6 petang, ringgit susut kepada 4.3880/3910 berbanding dolar AS daripada paras penutup 4.3805/3850 pada Rabu berikutan kaitan dengan harga minyak.

● Kita akan ikut ketetapan oleh kerajaan untuk harga ubat-ubatan di negara ini. Sebarang semakan (harga dan masa kenaikan), kita akan ikut pekeliling kerajaan

Leonard Ariff
Abdul Shatar,
Pengarah Urusan
Kumpulan
Duopharma
Biotech



Pengguna disaran beralih ke jenama lain

Dari Muka 1

"Maklum balas pihak industri menunjukkan terdapat peningkatan permintaan mendadak bagi beberapa jenis ubat termasuk produk dengan bahan aktif parasetamol bagi rawatan demam dan sakit yang ringan, vitamin C serta ubat batuk dan selesema untuk kegunaan kanak-kanak," katanya dalam kenyataan semalam.

Norliza berkata, pemantauan yang ketat dan penyelesaian terhadap setiap isu dialami akan diteliti melalui komunikasi berterusan di antara KKM dan industri farmaseutikal bagi memastikan kesinambungan bekalan ubat-ubatan berkualiti, selamat dan berkesan kepada rakyat.

Kelmarin, BH melaporkan beberapa jenis ubat-ubatan mengalami kekurangan di pasaran, termasuk di klinik swasta berikutan kegagalan pembekal dari luar negara menghantar bekalan bahan



Dr Noor Azmi (dua dari kiri) berkunjung ke gerai pameran selepas merasmikan Bulan Pemakanan Malaysia Peringkat KKM 2022 di Bangi, semalam.

(Foto Aziah Azmee/BH)

perubatan di klinik swasta dan Persatuan Perubatan Malavsia

diambil, beliau turut menasihati pengguna supaya tidak me-

nerik, semua berkesan.

"Kalau tiada ubat yang sama,

boleh buat laporan. KKM sentiasa meneliti dan memantau klinik atau sesiapa sahaja yang cuba atau sengaja ambil kesempatan menaikkan harga ubat-ubatan kerana ini bukan masanya.

"Apa pun, semuanya terkawal dan tidak ada yang serius. Saya ambil contoh situasi di Selangor, setakat ini tidak ada isu.

"Bagaimanapun, KKM prihatin dengan isu ini dan akan lihat, sekali gus memastikan bahan mentah dapat masuk untuk pembuatan ubat dan sebagainya," katanya.

Dalam perkembangan berkaitan, Pengurus Kanan Gabungan Persatuan-Persatuan Pengguna Malaysia (FOMCA), S Baskaran, turut menasihatkan pengguna tidak melakukan pembelian panik ubat-ubatan, sebaliknya hanya yang perlu dan tidak menyimpan stok banyak kerana setiap ubat ada tarikh luput.

"Jangan buat pembelian panik, kita sebagai pengguna ada hak untuk memilih. Jangan berge-

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : LOKAL

Kuala Lumpur

Lebih sebulan selepas kerajaan melonggarkan protokol prosedur operasi standard (SOP) Covid-19, kes harian baharu masih terkawal dan kelmarin berada bawah 2,000 kes.

Daripada 1,877 kes harian baharu yang dilaporkan pada 2 Jun, Selangor menyumbang sebanyak 886 kes, diikuti Kuala Lumpur 315 kes, Perak 141 kes, Pulau Pinang 125 kes dan Negeri Sembilan 121 kes.

Negeri-negeri lain - Putrajaya 57 kes, Melaka 55 kes, Kedah 46 kes, Johor 42 kes, Sabah 32 kes, Pahang 17, Sarawak 14 kes, Kelantan 14 kes, Terengganu tujuh (7) kes, Perlis empat (4) kes dan Labuan satu (1) kes.

Untuk tempoh enam hari lepas (28 Mei hingga 2 Jun 2022), kes harian baharu Covid-19 dalam negara menyusut hampir 20 peratus kepada sebanyak 9,262 berbanding tempoh yang sama (21 Mei hingga 26 Mei) sebanyak 11,575 kes.

Sepanjang tempoh rangkuman mingguan (28 Mei hingga 2 Jun 2022) hanya dua kluster baharu dilaporkan oleh Kementerian Kesihatan

Malaysia (KKM) iaitu pada 31 Mei, kategori kumpulan berisiko tinggi (Kluster Jalan Broga) melibatkan daerah Hulu Langat, Selangor.

Setakat 31 Mei, terdapat 23 kes positif Covid-19. Satu lagi kluster, pada 2 Jun (pendidikan - Kluster Jalan Ipoh), melibatkan daerah Titiwangsa, Kepong di Kuala Lumpur dengan 34 kes positif Covid-19.

Ini menjadikan untuk bulan Mei 2022 setakat 2 Jun, KKM melaporkan empat kluster. Kluster lain ialah pada 22 Mei di Kinta, Perak (komuniti - Kluster Pulau Jaya), melibatkan 35 kes positif; pada 11 Mei di Serian, Sarawak (pusat tahanan - Kluster Dti Semuja 4) dengan 14 kes.

KKM mengesahkan sebanyak 7,014 kluster sepanjang pandemik Covid-19 melanda negara ini lebih dua tahun lalu

DUA TAHUN DILANDA COVID-19

NEGARA CATAT 7,014 KLUSTER

23

Kedudukan Malaysia berbanding 228 negara dilanda Covid-19

4

Jumlah kluster masih aktif dikesan setakat 2 Jun 2022

dan setakat 2 Jun hanya tinggal empat kluster yang masih aktif.

Dengan 1,877 kes harian baharu, kes kumulatif Covid-19 Malaysia kini sebanyak 4,510,196.

Sebanyak 1,715 kes sembuh Covid-19 dilaporkan kelmarin menjadikan kes kumulatif sembuh setakat pukul 11:59 malam 2 Jun 2022 sebanyak 4,451,308.

Berikut kes harian baharu Covid-19 sepanjang tempoh rangkuman mingguan 28 Mei hingga 2 Jun 2022: 28 Mei (1,645), 29 Mei (1,155), 30 Mei (1,325), 31 Mei (1,451), 1 Jun (1,809) dan 2 Jun (1,877).

layah yang dilanda pandemik Covid-19. Di hadapan Malaysia ialah Ukraine (5,011,433) dan Mexico (5,759,773).

Dalam kalangan 228 buah negara, mengikut data terkini Worldometer, Republik Rakyat Demokratik Korea (DPRK) terus mencatat kes harian baharu tertinggi dengan kelmarin mencatat sebanyak 96,610 kes diikuti Amerika Syarikat 82,896 kes dan Taiwan 76,986 kes.

Dari segi angka kematian, Amerika Syarikat mencatat angka kematian akibat Covid-19 tertinggi dan setakat kelmarin sebanyak 1,032,862 kes.

Sementara itu, data COVIDNOW KKM setakat pukul 11:59 mlm 2 Jun 2022 menunjukkan sebanyak 22,204 kes (95.7 peratus) dikuarantin di rumah daripada 23,208 kes aktif COVID-19

yang dilaporkan.

Sebanyak 30 kes (0.1 peratus) lagi di Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan Covid-19 (PKRC); 945 kes (4.1 peratus) di hospital; 12 kes (0.1 peratus) di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU) tanpa memerlukan Alat Bantuan Pernafasan (ABP) sementara 17 kes (0.1 peratus) di ICU memerlukan ABP.

Rekod kadar kebolehan kitan Covid-19 atau Ro/Rt untuk seluruh negara sepanjang tempoh rangkuman ini adalah seperti berikut:

*paras terendah 0.52 dicatat pada 6 Mei 2022.

*kembali melebihi paras 1.00 iaitu 1.05 pada 11 Mei 2022.

28 Mei (0.94), 29 Mei (0.90), 30 Mei (0.91), 31 Mei (0.90), 1 Jun (tiada maklumat) dan 2 Jun (tiada maklumat).

Negeri yang mencatat Ro/Rt yang tinggi pada 31 Mei 2022 adalah Sabah (1.03), Sarawak (0.98) dan Melaka (0.96).

R-Naught (Ro/Rt) ialah kebolehan kitan satu kes positif Covid-19 kepada orang lain dalam tempoh kebolehan kitan. Ro/Rt 0.5 diperlukan untuk melandaikan lekuk jangkitan koronavirus maut ini.

Keluar duit lebih vaksin sendiri

Putrajaya: Pengguna perlu berbelanja lebih berikutan kos perkhidmatan vaksinasi Covid-19 di fasiliti swasta merangkumi harga vaksin selain beberapa caj ditetapkan sendiri pengamal perubatan dan hospital berkenaan.

Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali berkata, ia termasuk caj konsultasi dalam Jadual Ketujuh di bawah Akta Kemudahan dan Perkhidmatan Jagaan Kesihatan Swasta 1998 (Akta 586), caj perkhidmatan serta caj barangan pakai buang yang digunakan ketika mengendalikan suntikan vaksin Covid-19.

Katanya, harga siling vaksin Covid-19 yang ditetapkan mengikut Akta Kawalan Harga Dan Antipencatutan 2011 (Akta 723) sebelum ini, dan pengamal perubatan swasta perlu mematuhi adalah tidak termasuk kos pengendalian perkhidma-

tan vaksinasi.

Dr Noor Azmi berkata, kerajaan sebelum ini menetapkan harga runcit dan borong maksimum bagi dua produk vaksin Covid-19 jenama CoronaVac keluaran Sinovac dan Covilo keluaran Sinopharm berkuat kuasa 15 Januari lalu.

"Harga runcit maksimum bagi CoronaVacSuspension for Injection SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine (Vero Cell), Inactivated dengan nombor pendaftaran MAL21036010ARZ dan MAL21046125ACSZ adalah RM77 manakala harga borong ditetapkan pada RM62 per dos.

"Bagi vaksin COVIL0 Suspension for Injection Covid-19 Vaccine (Vero Cell), Inactivated dengan nombor pendaftaran MAL21076098AZ pula, harga runcit maksimum adalah RM77

manakala harga borong ialah RM62 per dos.

"Oleh itu, kos akhir yang perlu dibayar oleh pengguna adalah merangkumi kos vaksin Covid-19 iaitu harga runcit maksimum yang ditetapkan, fi konsultasi dan kos pengendalian perkhidmatan vaksinasi," menurutnya, semalam.

Kenyataan itu dikeluarkan sebagai

maklum balas terhadap laporan bertajuk *Govt not controlling process of Covid-19 vaccines at private hospitals* - Bernama



"la termasuk caj konsultasi dalam Jadual Ketujuh Akta 586 Dr Noor Azmi"

68% dewasa terima dos penggalak

Kuala Lumpur: Seramai 1,180,415 atau 33.2 peratus kanak-kanak berusia lima hingga 11 tahun di negara ini sudah lengkap divaksin di bawah Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan Kanak-Kanak (PICKids), setakat kelmarin.

Berdasarkan data menerusi laman sesawang COVIDNOW, sejumlah 1,728,942 atau 48.6 peratus daripada kumpulan itu sudah menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Bagi remaja berusia 12 hingga 17 tahun, sebanyak 2,914,722 atau 93.7 peratus sudah lengkap divaksin, manakala 3,011,068 atau 96.8 peratus daripada kumpulan itu menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Dalam pada itu, sejumlah

16,100,274 atau 68.4 peratus orang dewasa di negara ini sudah menerima suntikan dos penggalak, 22,975,123 atau 97.6 peratus pula sudah lengkap dua dos suntikan vaksin dan 23,251,598 atau 98.8 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Sebanyak 4,666 dos harian diberikan semalam meliputi 563 dos pertama, 2,557 dos kedua dan 1,546 dos penggalak, menjadikan jumlah kumulatif pemberian vaksin di bawah Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (Pick) adalah 70,947,904.

Sementara itu, Portal Github Kementerian Kesihatan melaporkan dua kelmarin dengan masing-masing satu kes di Johor dan Kedah. - Bernama

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 7

RUANGAN : LOKAL

329 JENIS PRODUK SUPLEMEN DIRAMPAS

EKSPLOITASI SELEBRITI LARIS UBAT HARAM



PEGAWAI CPF JKNS menjalankan operasi pengeledahan di premis yang diserbu di Bangi, Selangor. Gambar kecil, produk ubat-ubatan tidak berdaftar yang dirampas.

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Kuala Lumpur

Eksploitasi pendakwah terkenal, pelakon dan artis sebagai duta produk bagi melariskan jualan produk 'haram' menerusi platform e-dagang.

Strategi pemasaran itu ternyata berjaya meyakinkan ribuan pengguna tanpa mereka menyedari produk suplemen kesihatan dibeli tidak berdaftar dengan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM).

Pengarah Kesihatan negeri Selangor, Datuk Indera Dr Sha'ari Ngadiman berkata, aktiviti menjual produk suplemen kesihatan tanpa kelulusan itu diambil tindakan oleh Cawangan Penguatkuasaan, Bahagian Perkhidmatan Farmasi Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Se-

langor (CPF JKNS) hasil serbuan ke atas sebuah premis perniagaan, semalam.

Menurutnya, pihaknya terlebih dahulu menjalankan risikan susulan laporan terhadap penjualan produk tidak berdaftar berkenaan secara atas talian.

"Serbuan membatikan pemeriksaan mengejut terhadap sebuah premis di Bangi, Selangor.

"Hasilnya, sejumlah 329 jenis produk suplemen kesihatan yang sebahagiannya diperolehi dari luar negara dan tidak berdaftar dengan Pihak Berkuasa Kawalan Dadah (PBKD) KKM dirampas.

"Semua produk itu dianggarkan bernilai RM295,000 mengikut harga pasaran.

Siasatan awal mendapati produk itu diiklankan melalui platform e-dagang terkenal di negara ini dengan tuntutan palsu kononnya ia berdaftar dengan KKM," katanya.

Difahamkan produk suplemen dipasarkan itu didakwa boleh menyembuhkan pelbagai penyakit membatikan jantung, kolesterol, kencing manis dan bermacam penyakit lain.

Turut ditemui pelbagai produk ubat-ubatan dibawa masuk dari luar negara dan tidak berdaftar.

Beliau berkata, siasatan lanjut akan dijalankan mengikut Peraturan 7(1)(a), Peraturan-Peraturan Kawalan Dadah & Kosmetik 1984. Jika sabit kesalahan, pemilik premis boleh dikenakan hukuman iaitu denda tidak melebihi RM25,000 atau tiga tahun penjara atau kedua-duanya sekali mengikut Akta Jualan Dadah 1952.

"JKNS menasihati orang ramai supaya sentiasa berhati-hati sewaktu membeli apa-apa produk kesihatan dan kosmetik yang dijual secara atas talian serta memastikan produk kesihatan

dan kosmetik yang dibeli di pasaran mematuhi keperluan undang-undang yang dikuatkuasakan.

"Semakan kesahihan nombor pendaftaran produk atau notifikasi kosmetik boleh dibuat dengan melayari www.npra.moh.gov.my atau dengan menghubungi Bahagian Regulatori Farmasi Negara di talian 03-78835400," katanya.

Menurutnya, sebarang aduan berkaitan produk-produk meragukan boleh disalurkan kepada Program Perkhidmatan Farmasi melalui laman sesawang <http://www.pharmacy.gov.my> atau melalui portal Sistem Pengurusan Aduan Agensi Awam (SisPAA) di alamat <http://moh.spab.gov.my> atau menghubungi talian 03-78413200 supaya tindakan sewajarnya dapat diambil bagi membanteras penjualan produk ini di pasaran.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 17

RUANGAN : LOKAL

KKM terima maklum balas pihak industri, tiada gangguan bekalan menyeluruh

Permintaan ubat-ubatan meningkat

Oleh SITI A'ISYAH SUKAIMI

PUTRAJAYA - Pihak industri memaklumkan terdapat peningkatan permintaan yang mendadak bagi beberapa jenis ubat-ubatan seperti produk dengan bahan aktif paracetamol (rawatan demam dan sakit yang ringan), vitamin C serta ubat batuk dan selsema untuk kegunaan kanak-kanak.

Pengarah Kanan Perkhidmatan Farmasi Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM), Norhaliza A. Halim berkata, bagaimanapun pada masa ini, tiada produk yang mengalami gangguan bekalan secara menyeluruh kerana kebanyakan produk mempunyai alternatif daripada pelbagai jenama lain yang mempunyai indikasi yang sama.

"Pihak pengilang juga telah meningkatkan kapasiti pengeluaran bagi memenuhi permintaan yang tinggi.

"KKM sedang mendapatkan maklum balas lanjut daripada



KKM telah meminta pihak pengilang untuk meningkatkan kapasiti pengeluaran ubat-ubatan bagi memenuhi permintaan yang tinggi. - GAMBAR HIASAN

pihak industri berhubung status sebenar bekalan ubat-ubatan yang dihasilkan di Malaysia

atau diimport serta isu-isu yang berkaitan dengannya," katanya dalam satu kenyataan semalam.

Maklum balas itu diterima hasil perjumpaan KKM melalui Program Perkhidmatan Far-

masi bersama pihak industri farmaseutikal iaitu Malaysian Organisation of Pharmaceutical Industries (MOPDI), Pharmaceutical Association of Malaysia (PhAMA) dan Malaysia Association of Pharmaceutical Suppliers (MAPS) kelmarin.

Mengulas lanjut, beliau berkata, pemantauan ketat dan penyelesaian terhadap setiap isu yang dialami akan diteliti melalui komunikasi berterusan antara KKM dan pihak industri farmaseutikal bagi memastikan kesinambungan bekalan ubat-ubatan berkualiti, selamat dan berkesan kepada rakyat Malaysia.

Terdahulu, media melaporkan isu kekurangan bekalan ubat-ubatan dan bahan mentah bagi produk farmaseutikal yang dikatakan melibatkan ubat-ubatan untuk rawatan demam, selsema dan batuk, sakit tekak, antibiotik, ubat tahan sakit serta ubat-ubatan bagi mengurangkan gejala penyakit kaki, tangan dan mulut (HFMD).

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Bekalan ubat masih terkawal

Kekurangan tidak serius, orang ramai tidak perlu buat pembelian panik

SHAH ALAM

Orang ramai dinasihatkan supaya tidak membuat pembelian panik bagi ubat-ubatan kerana kekurangan yang berlaku tidak serius, malah hanya melibatkan jenama tertentu.

Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali berkata, pihaknya memberi jaminan bekalan ubat-ubatan secara amnya masih terkawal.

"Kita perlu faham bahawa keberkesanan ubat-ubatan un-

tuk merawat sesuatu penyakit adalah sama tanpa mengira jenama ataupun syarikat pengeluaran.

"Contohnya, untuk penyakit darah tinggi ada banyak jenama. Ada yang dipatenkan, ada yang generik dan semua itu berkesan kerana jika ubat jenama A tiada,

boleh ganti dengan ubat jenama B," katanya di sini pada Jumaat. Mengulas lanjut, Dr Noor Azmi berkata, KKM sentiasa memantau situasi itu dan tindakan tegas akan diambil sekiranya terdapat pihak cuba mengambil kesempatan memanipulasikan harga ubat-ubatan di pasaran.

Terdahulu, dalam ucapannya, Dr Noor Azmi berkata, tema sambutan Bulan Pemakanan Malaysia tahun ini ialah *Perangi Covid-19 dan NCD (penyakit ti-*



DR NOOR AZMI

dak berjangkit) dengan Makan Secara Sihat dan pilihannya selari dengan masalah NCD yang sekian lama membelenggu negara.

"Sambutan ini diadakan dengan harapan ia dapat meningkatkan lagi kesedaran masyarakat tentang kepentingan mengamalkan makan secara sihat," katanya.

Beliau berkata, Hasil Tinjauan Kesihatan dan Morbiditi Kebangsaan pada 2019 mendapati satu daripada dua rakyat Malaysia dewasa mempunyai masalah berat badan berlebihan atau obesiti.

"Ini sangat berbahaya kerana ia mendatangkan pelbagai penyakit, mengurangkan produktiviti dan memberi beban kepada perkhidmatan rawatan kesihatan," kata beliau. - *Bernama*



AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : NEWS/STORY OF THE DAY

MINISTRY MONITORING SITUATION

MEDS SUPPLY ADEQUATE TO TREAT HFMD SURGE

No need to panic buy or hoard as alternative brands are available, says deputy minister

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THE Health Ministry is gathering feedback from industry players on the medicine supply status in the country following reports of a shortage of certain medicines.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali, however, said the situation was under control and that there were alternatives to the medicines that were reportedly in short supply.

"There are alternative medicines and brands available in the market that consumers can choose from."

"For example, for high blood pressure we have various medicines for it, be it patented or generic, with both having the same effects."

"Having said that, in general, we are not facing a serious shortage. Everything is still under control," he told reporters after the

launch of the Nutrition Month Malaysia yesterday.

Dr Noor Azmi said the shortage could be attributed to the various Movement Control Orders imposed during the Covid-19 pandemic, resulting in late delivery of raw materials sourced from other countries.

"We will continue to monitor the situation to ensure the continuous supply of quality, safe and effective medicines for Malaysians," he said, urging consumers not to panic buy or start hoarding medications as it was not necessary.

On Thursday, Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Koh Kar Chai said there was a shortage of certain medicines in the market recently.

He added that although it was not a new phenomenon, the supply and demand situation must be corrected soon or it would affect the management of patients' healthcare.

He said the shortage of different types of medications was not constant as it varied with the supply and demand fluctuations in the market. He also said that medications meant for cough, cold and fever were more likely to be affected.

Health Ministry Pharmaceutical Services senior director Norhaliza A. Halim said there was no supply disruption due to the availability of alternatives

from other brands.

"We are getting feedback from industry players."

"Every issue highlighted will be examined and the ministry will resolve it by working closely with the pharmaceutical industry to ensure the continuous supply of quality, safe and effective medicines for Malaysians," she said yesterday.

On the reported shortage of medicine for fever, cough and cold, besides antibiotics, painkillers and anti-virals for Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease, Norhaliza said: "The Health Ministry through the Pharmaceutical Services Programme had met pharmaceutical industry players, namely the Malaysian Organisation of Pharmaceutical Industries, Pharmaceutical Association of Malaysia and Malaysia Association of Pharmaceutical Suppliers on June 2."

"From the meeting, we were told that there was a sharp increase in demand for some medicines, such as products with paracetamol as the active ingredient for fever and mild pain, Vitamin C, as well as cough and cold medicines for children."

"However, at present, none of the products are experiencing a comprehensive supply disruption as most have alternatives from other brands."

"Manufacturers have also increased production capacity to meet high demands," she said.

Page 1 pic: A worker checking the stock of medicines at a pharmacy in George Town, Penang, yesterday.



Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 3

RUANGAN : NATION/NEWS

FOCUS NOW ON CORE HEALTHCARE

PRIVATE VAX CENTRES CLOSING DOWN

Poor uptake, expiry date of vaccines prompt private hospitals to cease operations, says association president

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MANY private hospitals in the country are closing down their Covid-19 vaccination centres and turning their focus on core healthcare services.

Association of Private Hospitals Malaysia president Datuk Dr Kuljit Singh said the closure came as members felt they had played their part to assist the government in vaccinating the population against the virus in the Covid-19 National Immunisation Programme (NIP), including PICKids.

"Right now, they want to concentrate more on their normal businesses. They have contributed their share of responsibilities since the NIP began. It is up to the private hospitals if they want to keep their vaccination centres going or otherwise. No one is forcing them to run it. It is voluntary."

"They have given enough in the exercise and there was ample time for the people to come forward to get vaccinated since the NIP began in February last year. The deadline for PICKids was also



Datuk Dr Kuljit Singh

extended until May 31. "The centres are being shut down because there are not many patients going in to get the paid vaccinations. They are in small numbers and there are also parents who are also still sceptical about getting their kids jabbed."

"Poor uptake could be one of the reasons the centres are closing because they are at risk of financial losses as the vaccines will expire. It is not feasible, so it is difficult to keep these centres open," he told the *New Straits Times*.

The closures, he added, now al-

lowed the private hospitals to convert the space previously used to house Covid-19 operations for other medical and healthcare purposes.

Dr Kuljit added that most private hospitals had kept their centres open until the last day of PICKids for children aged 5 to 11, where data up to June 1 on the CovidNow portal showed that 48.6 per cent had received one dose of the vaccine, while 33.2 per cent had been fully immunised.

As PICKids had ended, parents seeking to immunise their children would now have to turn to private healthcare facilities, where they have to pay for the Sinovac vaccine.

Dr Kuljit said the government only allowed private hospitals to

administer Sinovac as a commercially used vaccine as the Pfizer vaccine was government controlled.

He said there was a cap for the amount that they could charge for the Sinovac vaccine, and the costs could vary from one private hospital to another. On top of the vaccine charges, there were also additional costs, such as service, syringe and facility fees imposed by the private hospitals, but he assured that it was within a reasonable amount.

"The price for the Sinovac vaccine is not much and the price is controlled. Every hospital has its own pricing, but they should be within the ceiling price set. It is up to the hospital to decide."

"The association does not get

involved with their pricing. We cannot tell how much they should be charging a patient," he added.

On Jan 13, Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin and Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Alexander Nanta Linggi jointly revealed that the Sinovac vaccine cost a maximum of RM62 at wholesale level and RM77 at retail level.

They had both said the fixing of the Sinovac ceiling price was to ensure that the public paid a fair price for them at private healthcare facilities.

The government had also capped the wholesale ceiling and retail prices of Sinopharm vaccine at RM48 and RM77, respectively.

NST checks on several private hospital websites showed prices of two doses of Sinovac vaccines for adults and adolescents ranged between RM350 and RM196, including service charges.

Meanwhile, Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations chief executive officer T. Saravanan said they had not received any feedback on unjust vaccine charges imposed by private healthcare facilities.

He said as the government had extended PICKids, parents should not be complaining that it was unfair for them to part with their money now to have their children vaccinated.

"Those who were eligible but took too long to think and have now changed their minds, that is the price they pay for doubting."

"The government has showed their commitment in wanting to get as many children protected against the virus for free. But if parents missed the boat to get their children immunised, they have no choice but to pay out of their own pockets now," he said.



Children waiting to receive their Covid-19 vaccine at a private clinic on the last day of PICKids on May 31 in Kuala Terengganu. BERNAMA PIC

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NEWS/NATION

DEALING WITH COVID-19

KHAIRY LAUDS MALAYSIA-S'PORE TIES

Health minister conveys govt's gratitude for republic's cooperation during pandemic

SINGAPORE

THE cordial relationship and cooperation between Malaysia and Singapore in dealing with Covid-19 have made the two countries an epidemiological region, which saw the opening of the border between the two nations after more than two years of closure, Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said.

He said the matter was shared with Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong when he paid a courtesy call on Lee at the Presidential Palace during his four-day official working visit here.

Khairy was in the city-state

from May 31 to June 3 as Lee Kuan Yew's seventh exchange fellow from Malaysia.

"At the meeting, Prime Minister Lee and I shared our experiences in facing the challenges of the Delta and Omicron waves during the Covid-19 pandemic," he said on his Facebook page.

He said he also conveyed the gratitude and appreciation of the Malaysian government, and the Health Ministry in particular, to Lee and the Singaporean government, notably the republic's Health Ministry, for their excellent commitment and cooperation during the pandemic.

"In addition, we also exchanged views on how to live a

safe life following the Covid-19 pandemic, the role of technology in further strengthening the delivery of the national health system, and also the importance of understanding a good behavioural science approach in shaping a responsible society."

Khairy also expressed his desire to boost the bilateral cooperation with Singapore and "hope that both countries and their people get the best benefits".

During his visit to the republic, Khairy also met Singaporean Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic Policies Heng Swee Keat, Parliamentary Speaker Tan Chuan-Jin, Senior Minister and

Coordinating Minister for National Security Teo Chee Hean, as well as Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies Tharman Shanmugaratnam.



Khairy Jamaluddin

He also met Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Finance Minister Lawrence Wong, his counterpart, Ong Ye Kung, and Communications and Information Minister Josephine Teo.

In conjunction with the visit, Khairy also spoke at the Asia Tech x Singapore Summit and at the National University of Singapore's Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health.

Established in 1991, the Lee

Kuan Yew Exchange Fellowship invites outstanding individuals for high-level visits to Singapore.

The fellows are chosen on the basis of their track records and extraordinary potential to contribute to the development of their nations and to bilateral relations with Singapore.

"Such exchanges help to foster dialogue and collaboration, and deepen our bilateral cooperation," said the ministry.

Lee Tzu Yang, chairman of the Lee Kuan Yew Exchange Fellowship, will host a welcome dinner for Khairy.

Khairy is the 71st Lee Kuan Yew exchange fellow.

Present during the courtesy call were the Malaysian High Commissioner to Singapore Datuk Dr Azfar Mohamad Mustafar and officers from the Malaysian Health Ministry. **Bernama**

PICKIDS

3 reasons behind Kelantan's low vaccination rate for kids

KOTA BARU: The Kelantan Health Department said there were three reasons behind the record low vaccination rate for children aged 5 to 11 in the state.

Its director, Datuk Dr Zaini Hussin, said the first was due to the fact that the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme for Children (PICKids) was not compulsory.

"Many parents in Kelantan saw that the programme was voluntary and, therefore, it was unnecessary for them to get their children aged 5 to 11 vaccinated."

"Apart from that, they felt more secure if their children do not take the Covid-19 jab as coronavirus cases involving children were low."

"Another reason behind the low turnout for PICKids is the low rate of severe cases among children in Kelantan."

"All these reasons have caused parents in Kelantan to not allow their children to get their first and second doses," he said.

Dr Zaini said despite the government not continuing with the programme, parents who were interested in vaccinating their children could do so.

"They can go to any health clinic or private health facility if they want their children to be inoculated."

Only 8.6 per cent of the state's children aged 5 to 11 completed the Covid-19 vaccination course.

"The figure is much lower com-

pared with the 115,000 children who are eligible (in Kelantan) for vaccination," said Dr Zaini.

It was reported yesterday that the Covid-19 vaccination rate in Terengganu and Kelantan remained below the 10 per cent mark at 9.9 per cent and 7.3 per cent, respectively.

Labuan had the highest child

vaccination rate in the country at 21.8 per cent, while at least 20 per cent of the children in Sarawak and Melaka had been vaccinated.

A total of 1,180,415 children aged 5 to 11, or 33.2 per cent of those in the age group, had been fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

Data from the Health Ministry's CovidNow portal showed that in Kelantan on Wednesday, 2,067 children received their second dose and 364 received their first dose.

More than 48 per cent of the children in the state have received at least one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NATION

KJ lauds bilateral Covid-19 control

Health Minister conveys gratitude to Singapore for close cooperation

SINGAPORE: The cordial relationship and cooperation between Malaysia and Singapore in dealing with Covid-19 has made the two countries an epidemiological region, said Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin.

This collaboration, added Khairy, eventually led to the opening of the border between the two nations after more than two years of closure.

He said the matter was shared with Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong when he paid a courtesy call on Lee at the Istana during his four-day official working visit here.

Khairy was in Singapore from

May 31 to June 3 as Lee Kuan Yew's seventh Exchange Fellow from Malaysia.

"At the meeting, PM Lee and I shared our experiences in facing the challenges of the Delta and Omicron waves during the Covid-19 pandemic," he said in the latest update on his Facebook page.

He said he also conveyed the gratitude and appreciation of the Malaysian government, and the Malaysian Health Ministry in particular, to Lee and the Singapore government, and notably to the republic's Health Ministry, for their excellent commitment and coopera-

tion during the pandemic.

"In addition, we also exchanged views on how to live a safe life after the Covid-19 pandemic, the role of technology in further strengthening the delivery of the national health system, and also the importance of understanding a good behavioural science approach in shaping a responsible society," he added in the post.

Khairy, according to Bernama, also expressed his desire to further strengthen bilateral cooperation with Singapore and "hopes that both countries and their people get the best benefits".

During his visit to Singapore, Khairy met Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic Policies Heng Swee Keat, Parliamentary Speaker Tan Chuan-Jin, Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for National Security Teo Chee Hean, as well as Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies Tharman Shanmugaratnam.

In addition, he also met with Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Finance Minister Lawrence Wong, his counterpart Ong Ye Kung, and Minister for Communications and Information Josephine Teo.

In conjunction with the visit, Khairy spoke at the Asia Tech : Singapore (ATxSG) Summit and at the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Saw Swee Hoe School of Public Health.

Established in 1991, the Lee Kuan Yew Exchange Fellowship invites outstanding individuals for high-level visits to Singapore.

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