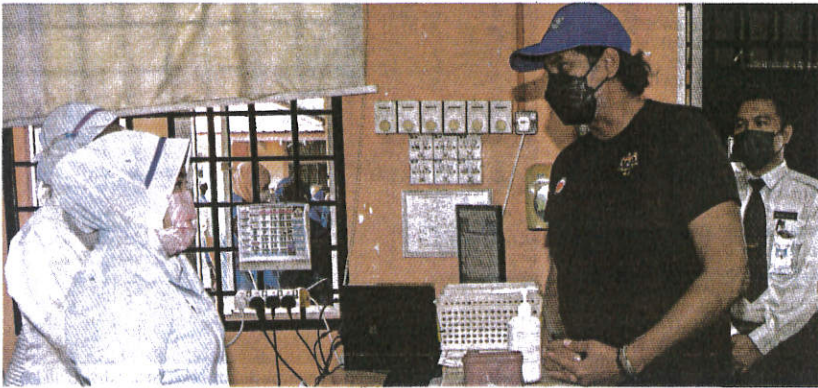


AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 5
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

PPV mega ditutup mulai 16 Mac akibat kos sewa tinggi



Khairy beramah mesra dengan kakitangan Kementerian Kesihatan ketika melawat Klinik Kesihatan Serkat, dekat Pontian, semalam. (Foto BERNAMA)

Pontian: Keputusan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) untuk menutup semua pusat pemberian vaksin (PPV) mega mulai 16 Mac ini memandangkan penyewaan lokasi pusat itu membabitkan kos yang tinggi.

Menterinya, Khairy Jamaluddin, berkata pihaknya mendapati bahawa penyewaan lokasi PPV Mega tidak lagi *cost-effective* memandangkan ia membabitkan dewan persidangan yang besar.

"Apabila kita menyewa dewan persidangan ini kita perlu bayar, bukan percuma jadi kita sudah guna sepenuhnya. Sekarang, tidak ada keperluan lagi untuk kita kekalkan PPV integrasi ataupun PPV mega.

"Selepas ini, hanya memadai kita sediakan yang lebih kecil

contohnya di klinik swasta dan klinik kesihatan," katanya kepada pemberita selepas melawat Klinik Kesihatan Serkat, Kukup dekat sini, semalam.

Khairy berkata, kehadiran penerima vaksin juga tidak seramai sebelum ini dan mungkin disebabkan sebahagian besar penduduk telah menerima vaksinasi.

"Di Johor sahaja lebih 70 peratus sudah dapat dos penggalak dan bagi Program Imunisasi COVID-19 Kebangsaan Kanak-kanak (PICKids) pula, boleh dibuat di peringkat sekolah iaitu PPV sekolah," katanya.

Semalam, Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah dilaporkan berkata, semua PPV mega akan ditutup bermula 16 Mac ini. BERNAMA

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 7

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Penularan COVID-19

KKM terus pergiat kempen vaksin untuk kanak-kanak

Sambutan terhadap PICKKids masih rendah berikutan ibu bapa masih bimbang kesan sampingan

Oleh Noor Atiqah Sulaiman
bhnews@bh.com.my

Putrajaya: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) akan terus mempergiatkan kempen pemberian vaksin kepada kanak-kanak terutamanya ketika penularan kes COVID-19 semakin meningkat.

Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali, berkata KKM akan tetap berusaha sepenuh hati untuk menyelamatkan rakyat di negara ini khususnya kanak-kanak daripada dijangkiti COVID-19.

Beliau mengakui, pemberian vaksin dalam Program Imunisasi COVID-19 Kebangsaan Kanak-Kanak (PICKKids) ketika ini masih rendah berikutan ibu bapa yang ragu dan bimbang vaksinasi itu memberi kesan sampingan kepada anak mereka.

"Sekarang, kes sangat tinggi dan kanak-kanak yang masuk ke hospital akibat COVID-19 juga semakin meningkat. Perkara ini ternyata membimbangkan.

"Risiko kepada kanak-kanak ini sangat tinggi jika mereka tidak divaksin. Ibu bapa sepatutnya lebih takut dan bimbang jika anak tidak diberi vaksin, terutamanya ketika peningkatan kes serta penularan varian Omicron yang mudah merebak ini," ka-



Petugas perubatan memberi suntikan vaksin COVID-19 dos pertama kepada kanak-kanak sempena PICKKids di PPV Offsite Tapak Ekspo Seberang Jaya. (Foto Danial Saad/BH)

tanya kepada BH.

Setakat kelmarin, hanya 1,003,227 kanak-kanak atau 28.3 peratus kanak-kanak berusia lima tahun hingga 11 tahun mendapatkan pelalian COVID-19 sejak PICKKids diperkenalkan pada 3 Februari lalu.

Dr Noor Azmi, yang juga Pengerusi Jawatankuasa Bertindak Imunisasi COVID-19 Kanak-Kanak (CITF-C), berkata ke-

bimbangan ibu bapa mengenai pemberian vaksin kanak-kanak itu banyak dipengaruhi oleh sosial media serta video yang tular.

"Saya seru semua ibu bapa dengarlah berita yang sahih daripada KKM serta beri kebenaran untuk anak ini divaksin, ia demi keselamatan mereka," katanya.

Dr Noor Azmi berkata, KKM

Ibu bapa sepatutnya lebih takut dan bimbang jika anak tidak diberi vaksin, terutamanya ketika peningkatan kes serta penularan varian Omicron yang mudah merebak ini

Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali,
Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan



melakukan beberapa perkara untuk meningkatkan kesedaran pemberian vaksin kepada kanak-kanak, menerusi beberapa medium seperti penerangan di radio, televisyen dan sosial media, membabitkan pakar perubatan, ahli agama dan 'influencer'.

Beliau berkata, KKM juga melaksanakan webinar, forum, malah menyebarkan maklumat manfaat vaksin dalam khutbah Jumaat.

Sebelum ini, Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata 50,826 orang kanak-kanak di bawah usia 12 tahun disahkan positif COVID-19 dari awal Januari hingga pertengahan bulan lalu.

Daripada jumlah itu, sebanyak 15,817 kes atau 31.12 peratus kanak-kanak dijangkiti kategori satu, diikuti kategori dua (34,857 kes), kategori tiga (120 kes), kategori empat (28 kes) dan kategori lima (empat kes).

Sementara itu, data COVID-NOW menunjukkan, sejumlah 14,984,241 individu atau 63.7 peratus populasi dewasa di negara sudah menerima dos penggalak COVID-19; 22,927,098 atau 97.4 lengkap vaksinasi, manakala 23,203,753 atau 98.6 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Bagi remaja berusia 12 tahun hingga 17 tahun, seramai 2,830,746 individu atau 91 peratus daripada populasi itu sudah melengkapkan vaksinasi dan 2,930,978 atau 94.2 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Selain itu, 67 kes kematian akibat COVID-19 direkodkan kelmarin, dengan kes tertinggi di Selangor dengan 14 kes, diikuti Kedah (12), Johor (10), Perak (lapan), Sabah (tujuh) dan masing-masing empat kes di Melaka dan Perlis.

Keliru maklumat punca kurang sambutan

Kuala Lumpur: Banyak maklumat mengelirukan, terutama daripada pakar kesihatan yang antivaksin COVID-19, adalah antara punca vaksinasi untuk kanak-kanak dan dos penggalak, semakin kurang mendapat sambutan.

Pakar perubatan kesihatan awam, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Prof Madya Halimatul Sakdiah Minhat, berkata pandangan daripada mereka yang bergelar pakar mengenai vaksin membuatkan masyarakat berasa keliru.

"Apabila ada maklumat yang bercanggah daripada mereka yang mempunyai latar belakang perubatan, sudah pasti akan membuatkan masyarakat mula ragu-ragu.

"Ia berbeza berbanding yang memberikan maklumat itu adalah orang biasa yang tiada latar belakang perubatan," katanya kepada BH.

Beliau berkata, keadaan itu menyebabkan orang ramai, terutama ibu bapa berasa ragu-ragu dan takut membenarkan anak mereka menerima suntikan.

Malah, katanya, ada juga doktor perubatan yang membuat siaran langsung menerusi Facebook, mengenai kesan sampingan vaksin, menyebabkan ibu bapa semakin bimbang.

"Berkemungkinan apa yang dikatakan oleh pakar berkenaan adalah berdasarkan jurnal, namun perlu juga dilihat kaedah pelaksanaan kajian itu sama ada memenuhi etika penyelidikan atau kaedah persampelan yang betul.

"Di sinilah pakar penyelidikan perlu tampil dan memberikan input mereka untuk membetulkan kembali apa sahaja yang didakwa secara salah," katanya.

Beliau juga menolak andaian cuti sekolah ketika ini menjadi punca pusat pemberian vaksin (PPV) langgan dan ramai ibu bapa tidak membawa anak mendapatkan suntikan kerana bercuti.

Halimatul
Sakdiah
Minhat



Vaksin Sinovac mula diberi hari ini

Putrajaya: Vaksin Coronavac (Sinovac) yang diluluskan pada 3 Mac lalu kepada kanak-kanak akan mula diberikan hari ini.

Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali, berkata vaksin berkenaan hanya akan diberikan kepada kanak-kanak yang tidak boleh menerima vaksin Comirnaty (Pfizer) atas faktor kesihatan.

Selain itu, katanya, ibu bapa

juga diberi pilihan untuk mendapatkan vaksin Sinovac kepada anak mereka jika tidak mahu menerima pelalian jenis Pfizer.

"Ibu bapa boleh menyemak senarai nama serta waktu operasi Pusat Pemberian Vaksin (PPV) yang menawarkan vaksin berkenaan secara walk-in di laman web Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) serta PHCorp," katanya

dalam kenyataan.

Dr Azmi Ghazali berkata, penawaran vaksin Sinovac di PPV yang dikendalikan oleh KKM dan PHCorp di bawah PICKKids adalah percuma.

Selain PICKKids, katanya, ada klinik dan hospital swasta menawarkan vaksin Sinovac kepada kanak-kanak berusia lima tahun hingga 11 tahun, dengan baya-

Beliau berkata, dua dos vaksin Sinovac akan diberikan kepada kanak-kanak lima tahun hingga 11 tahun dengan selang masa empat minggu.

Dalam pada itu, Dr Noor Azmi berkata, walaupun vaksin Sinovac itu sudah diluluskan, vaksin Comirnaty (Pfizer) tetap diberi keutamaan dalam PICKKids, khususnya bagi kanak-kanak berisiko tinggi dan komorbid.

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Penularan COVID-19

Individu dijangkiti tak perlu ulang ujian selesai kuarantin

RT-PCR mampu kesan virus dalam tempoh 2 hingga 3 bulan setelah disahkan positif

Oleh Noor Atiqah Sulaiman
bhnews@bh.com.my

Putrajaya: Individu yang sudah dijangkiti COVID-19 serta selesai menjalani kuarantin tidak perlu membuat ujian ulangan bagi memastikan tiada lagi virus berkenaan di dalam badan.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata ini kerana ujian seperti *Real-Time Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction* (RT-PCR) itu sangat sensitif dan akan mengesan kehadiran genetik virus berkenaan.

"RT-PCR ini sangat sensitif dan akan mengesan kehadiran genetik itu dalam saluran pernafasan dalam tempoh dua hingga tiga bulan selepas dijangkiti, misalnya dalam tempoh *viral shedding*."

"Namun, virus berkenaan sudah tidak dapat membiak dan individu itu (dijangkiti CO-

VID-19) tidak mungkin boleh menyebarkan jangkitan kepada orang lain," katanya dalam kenyataan, semalam.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, seseorang boleh dijangkiti COVID-19 jika berada berdekatan dengan pesakit COVID-19 yang batuk atau bersin dan virus itu boleh tersebar terutama antara individu yang mempunyai kontak rapat.

"Ujian RTK antigen (RTK-Ag) biasanya boleh mengesan jangkitan pada hari ketiga hingga ketujuh selepas seseorang terdedah kepada pesakit COVID-19, manakala RT-PCR boleh mengesan jangkitan seawal hari kedua hingga hari-14 selepas dijangkiti."

"Justeru, ketepatan ujian RTK-Ag dan RT-PCR bergantung kepada tempoh jangkitan ketika sampel diambil."

"Penggunaan RTK-Ag disarankan kepada individu bergejala atau berada dalam kumpulan berisiko tinggi sekiranya tidak bergejala," katanya.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, KKM meluluskan penggunaan RTK-Ag sebagai kaedah alternatif pengujian COVID-19 selain RT-PCR.

"RTK-Ag membantu memudahkan proses pengesanan dan pengawalan jangkitan COVID-19 kerana kaedah ini ringkas, mudah, murah dan boleh dilakukan

di lapangan.

"Proses pengujian RTK-Ag pantas dan keputusan ujian diperolehi antara 20 hingga 30 minit."

"KKM menyarankan semua ujian RTK Ag secara sendiri, profesional ataupun RT-PCR yang dijalankan perlu dilaporkan kepada KKM melalui MySejahtera atau Sistem Informasi Makmal Kesihatan Awam (SIMKA)."

"Laporan itu boleh diberikan tidak kira sama ada keputusan positif atau negatif, bagi membantu KKM untuk mendapatkan gambaran lebih jelas kadar jangkitan yang berlaku di dalam komuniti," katanya.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, RTK-Ag yang diluluskan penggunaannya di negara ini perlu mempunyai sekurang-kurangnya 95 peratus kadar sensitiviti dan 95 peratus kadar spesifisiti.

"Oleh itu, terdapat kemungkinan lima peratus berlaku keputusan *false positive* atau *false negative*."

"*False positive* berlaku apabila kit memberi keputusan positif bagi individu tidak dijangkiti."

"Antara faktor penyumbang menyebabkan keadaan ini adalah jangkitan silang daripada pesakit COVID-19 atau kontaminasi virus dari persekitaran, manakala *false negative* berlaku apa-

bila kit berkenaan tidak dapat mengesan kehadiran antigen dalam pesakit yang dijangkiti COVID-19."

"Ia mungkin disebabkan teknik pengambilan sampel yang salah dan masa sampel diambil di luar tempoh jangkitan," katanya.

Menurut Dr Noor Hisham, semua kit ujian COVID-19 yang dibawa masuk ke negara ini perlu melalui penilaian oleh Jawatankuasa Expert Committee daripada Pihak Berkuasa Peranti Perubatan (MDA).

"Jawatankuasa ini bertindak menyaring dan memutuskan sesuatu kit itu layak dan disyorkan untuk berada di pasaran berdasarkan prestasi kit ujian selepas melalui evaluasi atau penilaian makmal di pusat evaluasi terpilih, iaitu Makmal Kesihatan Awam Kebangsaan (MKAK), Institut Penyelidikan Perubatan (IMR), Tropical Infectious Diseases Research & Education Centre (TIDREC), Institut Kanser Negara (IKN), Hospital Kuala Lumpur (HKL), dan Hospital Sungai Buloh (HSgB)."

"Sehingga 18 Februari lalu, terdapat 128 kit ujian sendiri di pasaran yang mendapat rekomendasi ini."

"Kit ini juga sudah diluluskan penjualannya bukan saja di farmasi dan fasiliti kesihatan, malah ia juga mudah didapati di

● Ketepatan ujian RTK-Ag dan RT-PCR bergantung kepada tempoh jangkitan ketika sampel diambil. Penggunaan RTK-Ag disarankan kepada individu bergejala atau berada dalam kumpulan berisiko tinggi sekiranya tidak bergejala



Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan

kedai terpilih.

"Pihak MDA turut memantau keselamatan dan prestasi kit ujian sendiri yang mendapat kelulusan bersyarat dari semasa ke semasa."

"Sekiranya terdapat sebarang isu dengan kit ujian sendiri yang digunakan, orang awam dinasihatkan melaporkan kepada pembekal yang menjual kit ujian berkenaan dan MDA."

"Justeru, KKM amat menyarankan supaya orang awam mengoptimalkan ujian RTK-Ag sendiri sebagai ujian saringan bagi mengesan jangkitan COVID-19 dan membuat laporan sendiri bagi keputusan ujian melalui aplikasi MySejahtera," katanya.

Kes harian tertinggi dicatat 3 hari berturut-turut

Putrajaya: Malaysia terus mencatat angka harian tertinggi COVID-19 selama tiga hari berturut-turut, apabila 33,406 kes baharu direkodkan, kelmarin.

Ia lebih tinggi berbanding 33,209 jangkitan pada Jumaat dan 32,467 kes Khamis lalu.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata ia meliputi 33,064 kes tempatan dan 342 import.

Daripada jumlah itu, beliau berkata, pesakit Kategori 2 catat bilangan tertinggi membabitkan 20,035 kes atau 59.97 peratus.

"Sebanyak 13,157 kes (39.39 peratus) pula adalah pesakit Kategori 1, Kategori 3 (92), Kategori 4 (69) dan Kategori 5 (53)," katanya dalam kenyataan, semalam.

Memperincikan kes Kategori 3 hingga 5, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, 101 jangkitan baharu (47.20 peratus) membabitkan individu sudah menerima dua dos vaksin COVID-19, tetapi belum mendapatkan dos penggalak.

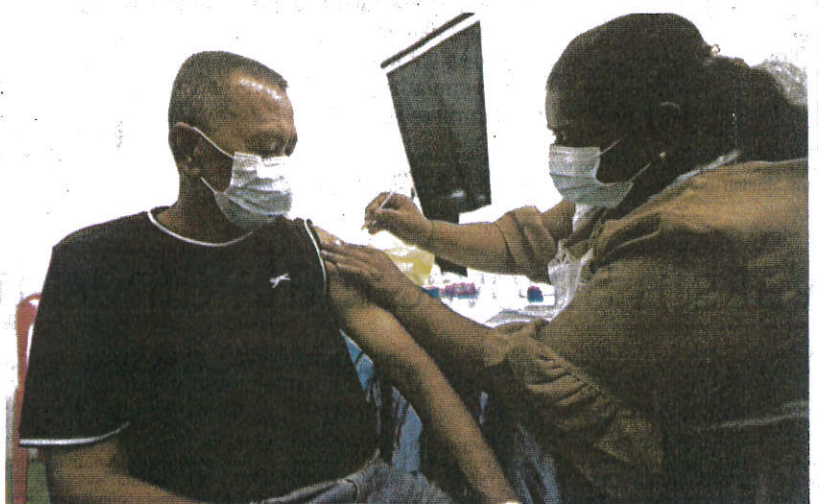
"Selain itu, 96 kes (44.86 peratus) adalah individu berusia 60 tahun dan ke atas; mempunyai komorbid (70), tidak divaksin atau belum menerima dua dos vaksin (80); sudah menerima dos penggalak (53); dan ibu mengandung (satu)," katanya.

Beliau memaklumkan, sebanyak 371 kes sedang dirawat di unit rawatan rapi (ICU) membabitkan 131 disahkan COVID-19 serta 240 lagi disyaki, berkeungkinan dan dalam siasatan.

Daripada jumlah itu, katanya, 226 kes memerlukan alat bantuan pernafasan, meliputi 74 disahkan COVID-19 serta 152 disyaki, berkemungkinan dan dalam siasatan.

Dalam pada itu, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, 11 kluster baharu COVID-19 dilaporkan, kelmarin, menjadikan 474 kluster masih aktif, setakat ini.

Sebanyak 27,143 kes sembuh dilaporkan, kelmarin, membawa kepada jumlah kumulatif 3,250,793.



Petugas perubatan memberikan suntikan vaksin COVID-19 dos penggalak kepada penerima di Pusat Pemberian Vaksin (PPV) Offsite Dewan Ang Si Chong, Butterworth. (Foto hiasan)

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO
 MUKA SURAT : 6
 RUANGAN : COVID-19



PENGISIAN katil kes kritikal di ICU catat peratusan melebihi 50 peratus di tujuh negeri. - Gambar NSTP/EFFENDY RASHID

Kes baharu terus catat peningkatan

Kuala Lumpur: Kes baharu Covid-19 di negara ini mencatatkan peningkatan dengan 33,406 kes dilaporkan kelmarin berbanding 33,209 kes, Jumat lalu.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, ia menjadikan jumlah kes kumulatif kepada 3,595,172 kes setakat ini. Katanya, kes sembuh mencatatkan 27,143 kes dengan keseluruhan kes kumulatif adalah 3,250,793 kes.

"Kes import adalah sebanyak 342 kes dengan 282 adalah warganegara dan 60 bukan warganegara.

"Kes tempatan sebanyak 33,064 kes de-

ngan 32,074 warganegara manakala 990 bukan warganegara," katanya dalam kenyataan, semalam.

Beliau berkata, kes yang memerlukan rawatan di unit rawatan rapi (ICU) sebanyak 371 kes dengan 131 kes disahkan Covid-19 manakala 240 kes disyaki, kemungkinan dan kes dalam siasatan.

Katanya, kes memerlukan bantuan pernafasan pula sebanyak 226 kes dengan 74 kes sudah disahkan Covid-19 manakala 152 kes disyaki, kemungkinan dan kes dalam siasatan.

Menurutnya, 11 kluster baharu dicatatkan kelmarin menjadikannya jumlah kluster sebanyak 6,837 setakat ini.

Sebanyak 371 kes memerlukan rawatan di ICU

28.3 peratus populasi kanak-kanak sudah terima dos pertama

Kuala Lumpur: Sebanyak 1,003,227 individu atau 28.3 peratus populasi kanak-kanak berusia lima hingga 11 tahun di Malaysia sudah menerima dos pertama vaksin Covid-19 melalui Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan Kanak-Kanak (PICKids) setakat kelmarin.

Berdasarkan data menerusi laman web COVID-NOW, sejumlah 14,984,241 individu atau 63.7 peratus populasi dewasa di negara ini pula menerima dos penggalak Covid-19 dan seramai 22,927,098 atau 97.4 lengkap vaksinasi manakala 23,203,753 atau 98.6 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Bagi remaja berusia 12 hingga 17 tahun, sebanyak 2,830,746 individu atau 91 peratus daripada populasi itu telah melengkapkan vaksinasi mereka manakala

2,930,978 atau 94.2 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Sebanyak 68,081 dos vaksin diberikan kelmarin meliputi 29,714 dos pertama, 903 dos kedua dan 37,464 dos penggalak menjadikan jumlah kumulatif dos vaksin yang diberikan di bawah Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (Pick) sebanyak 67,672,349.

Sementara itu, menurut portal GitHub Kementerian Kesihatan, 67 kes kematian akibat Covid-19 direkodkan kelmarin dengan Selangor mencatatkan 14 kes, diikuti Kedah (12), Johor (10), Perak (lapan), Sabah (tujuh) dan masing-masing empat kes di Melaka dan Perlis.

Pahang dan Kelantan pula masing-masing melaporkan tiga kes manakala satu kes masing-masing di Negeri Sembilan dan Pulau Pinang.

Oleh Yusmizal Dolah Aling
 yusmizal@hmetro.com.my

Pengisian katil ICU meningkat

Pesakit Covid-19 perlukan bantuan ventilator turut catat pertambahan kepada 226 pesakit

Kuala Lumpur

Tujuh negeri mencatatkan peratusan pengisian katil kes kritikal di unit rawatan rapi (ICU) melebihi 50 peratus, kelmarin.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, negeri itu ialah Putrajaya dengan 83 peratus, Johor (65 peratus), Kuala Lumpur (65 peratus), Perlis (64 peratus), Kelantan (63 peratus), Selangor (62 peratus), dan Perak (55 peratus).

Katanya, bagi katil bukan ICU, 12 negeri menunjukkan peratusan pengisian melebihi 50 peratus iaitu Selangor dengan 117 peratus, Putrajaya (99 peratus), Perak (97 peratus), Kuala Lumpur

(94 peratus), Perlis 92 peratus), Kelantan (83 peratus), Terengganu (76 peratus), Pahang (69 peratus), Sarawak (68 peratus), Johor (68 peratus), Pulau Pinang (57 peratus) dan Sabah (52 peratus).

"Bagi katil Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan Covid-19 (PKRC) hanya satu negeri iaitu Me-

laka menunjukkan peratusan pengisian melebihi 50 peratus iaitu 61 peratus.

"Pesakit Covid-19 yang memerlukan alat bantuan pernafasan (ventilator) meningkat kepada 226 pesakit dengan peratusan penggunaan ventilator sebanyak 26 peratus," katanya dalam kenyataan,

“PKRC di Melaka catat peratusan pengisian melebihi 50 peratus”
 Dr Noor Hisham

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 7

RUANGAN : COVID-19

PICKIDS DI PAHANG

40,150 sudah terima vaksin



DR Nor Azimi

Kuantan: Seramai 40,150 kanak-kanak di Pahang sudah mendapatkan suntikan vaksin Covid-19 menerusi Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan Kanak-kanak (PICKids) setakat ini.

Pengarah Jabatan Kesihatan Pahang, Datuk Dr Nor Azimi Yunus berkata, jumlah itu merangkumi 20.8 peratus daripada 192,600 kanak-kanak lima hingga 11 tahun yang disasarkan menerima vaksin.

Katanya, Cameron Highlands merekodkan pencapaian tertinggi iaitu 38.2 peratus berbanding daerah lain yang mencatat antara 27.2 peratus dan 21.1 peratus.

"Ketika ini, enam Pusat Pemberian Vaksin (PPV) dibuka secara jumpa terus iaitu Dewan Eng Choon dan UNIKlinik Indera Mahkota Dua, di sini serta Dewan Jubli Perak, Raub.

"PPV lain pula ialah di Dewan Kuala Rompin, Rompin; Dewan Tun Razak dan Pusat Latihan Kesihatan Mentakab di Temerloh," katanya dalam kenyataan, semalam.

Nor Azimi berkata, PICKids Pahang bermula pada 7 Februari lalu dengan menyasarkan 192,600 kanak-kanak.

Katanya, sebanyak 133 PPV yang beroperasi dengan kapasiti keseluruhan sebanyak 5,075 dos sehari.

"PPV itu membabitkan 46 PPV kluster sekolah, 67 PPV Klinik Kesihatan, satu PPV awam dan lapan PPV *offsite* dan 18 pasukan *outreach* sekolah.

"Oleh itu, JKN Pahang mengharapkan lebih ramai kanak-kanak akan mendapatkan suntikan vaksin," katanya.

Tiada arahan wajib booster di bazar Ramadan: KKM

Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) tidak pernah mengeluarkan sebarang arahan atau ketetapan supaya suntikan dos penggalak menjadi kewajipan ketika pembukaan bazar Ramadan oleh peniaga tempatan.

Menterinya, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar menegaskan, pihaknya tidak mengeluarkan arahan itu kepada pihak berkuasa tempatan (PBT) atau penganjur bazar.

"Kita KKM tidak keluarkan apa-apa arahan atau syarat kepada PBT untuk beri booster. Ini semua adalah bidang kuasa pihak berkenaan.

"Jika pasar malam adalah PBT, jika di masjid adalah Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri.

"Kita bagi nasihat, tetapi nasihat kita bukanlah sampai nak pergi pasar sampai nak kena booster," katanya ketika melancarkan Persidangan Tahunan Dialisis di sini, semalam.

Ditanya adakah keperluan kewajipan suntikan dos penggalak kepada peniaga bazar, beliau menafikan perkara itu berlaku.

Isu kewajipan dos penggalak bagi peniaga bazar Ramadan tular selepas seorang pengguna media sosial memuat naik surat arahan sebuah PBT yang meletakkan syarat tiga suntikan vaksin termasuk dos penggalak kepada peniaga dan pembantu gerai berkaitan.

Pengguna itu turut menyalahkan Khairy Jamaluddin kerana menyangka beliau mengeluarkan arahan sedemikian.



SPPV Hospital USM suntik 56,842 dos vaksin

Kota Bharu: Pusat Pemberian Vaksin Khas (SPPV) Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) sudah memberikan sebanyak 56,842 dos suntikan vaksin sejak Mac tahun lalu sehingga kini.

Timbalan Pengarah Operasinya, Profesor Dr Mohd Imran Yusof berkata, daripada jumlah itu, ia membabitkan 24,000 penerima iaitu 8,500 dos penggalak dan terbaharu adalah 466 dos vaksin kepada anak-kanak berusia lima hingga 11 tahun.

"Dengan jumlah pesakit dan peningkatan semula kemasukan ke wad Covid dan ICU di Kelantan sejak akhir-akhir ini, adakah ma-

syarakat benar-benar memahami peranan vaksin dalam mencegah penularan Covid-19 dan kenapa begitu ramai secara tiba-tiba menjadi begitu pakar dalam isu vaksinasi ini?"

"Dalam hal ini, adalah penting untuk golongan enggan divaksin memahami bahawa vaksin bertindak sebagai perisai daripada virus Covid-19 yang berupaya mengurangkan risiko jangkitan teruk," katanya.

Katanya, pematuhan prosedur operasi standard (SOP) juga perlu berterusan dalam usaha mengurangkan kadar jangkitan, sekali gus menangani virus Covid-19 daripada terus merebak.



PETUGAS barisan hadapan antara golongan berisiko tinggi dijangkiti Covid-19.

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Kuala Lumpur

Kematian tanpa mengetahui diri dijangkiti Covid-19 ternyata membimbangkan banyak pihak, khususnya mereka yang terdedah dengan kerjaya dan lokasi berisiko.

Pakar Kesihatan Awam Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh berkata, petugas barisan hadapan dan mereka yang terdedah dengan perkumpulan ramai antara golongan berisiko tinggi dijangkiti.

Menurutnya, ini ditambah pula dengan penularan varian Omicron yang menyebabkan seseorang itu dijang-

ELAK KEMATIAN TANPA TAHU DJANGKITI

Buat ujian sendiri dengan lebih kerap

kiti Covid-19 tanpa simptom.

"Ujian sendiri lebih kerap antara tempoh tiga hingga empat hari sekali perlu dilakukan untuk memastikan diri bebas Covid-19.

"Covid-19 tidak boleh di kesan dengan hanya sekali ujian kerana virus memerlukan tempoh inkubasi dalam tubuh manusia," katanya kepada Harian Metro.

Beliau berkata, lebih kerap

ujian sendiri dijalankan maka lebih mudah seseorang itu boleh mengetahui sama ada sudah dijangkiti Covid-19 atau sebaliknya.

Katanya, kit ujian sendiri yang boleh dibeli kini memudahkan proses itu dijalankan di mana saja.

"Golongan yang terdedah dengan orang ramai seperti petugas barisan hadapan dan profesion lain perlu ke-

rap menjalani ujian sendiri.

"Sekarang penularan tinggi namun disebabkan tiada simptom menyebabkan seseorang itu hanya sedar apabila keadaan semakin kritikal.

"Kekerapan ujian sendiri membantu kita memastikan tahap kesihatan berada pada tahap yang terbaik selain membolehkan tindakan segera diambil jika dijangkiti,"

katanya.

Baru-baru ini Menteri Kesihatan Khairy Jamaluddin mendedahkan kira-kira 91 peratus kes kematian di luar fasiliti kesihatan (BID) membabitkan individu yang tidak mengetahui mereka dijangkiti Covid-19.

Peningkatan kes BID sebelum mendapat rawatan di fasiliti kesihatan itu membimbangkan.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : COVID-19

PICKids

Mula pemberian Sinovac hari ini

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Putrajaya

Pemberian vaksin Coronavac (Sinovac) yang diluluskan kepada kanak-kanak 3 Mac lalu akan diberikan bermula hari ini.

Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali (*gambar*) berkata, vaksin berkenaan hanya

akan diberikan kepada kanak-kanak yang tidak boleh menerima vaksin Comirnaty (Pfizer) atas faktor kesihatan.

Beliau berkata, selain itu ibu bapa juga diberi pilihan untuk mendapatkan vaksin Sinovac ini kepada anak mereka sekiranya tidak bersejua untuk memberikan pelan Pfizer.

"Mulai esok (hari ini), Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) akan mula menawarkan vaksin Sinovac ini di pusat pem-

berian vaksin (PPV) terpilih dan ibu bapa boleh menyemak senarai nama serta waktu operasi PPV yang menawarkan vaksin berkenaan secara *walk-in* di laman web KKM serta PHCorp," katanya semalam.

CoronaVac adalah vaksin kedua yang dilulus-

kan penggunaannya selepas vaksin Comirnaty.

Tambah Dr Azmi Ghazali, penawaran vaksin Sinovac di PPV yang dikendalikan oleh KKM dan PHCorp di bawah PICKids adalah percuma.

"Selain daripada program PICKids, ada juga klinik dan hospital swasta yang menawarkan vaksin Sino-

vac kepada kanak-kanak lima hingga 11 tahun dengan bayaran," katanya.

Dr Noor Azmi berkata, vaksin Sinovac ini hanya boleh diberi apabila kanak-kanak mencapai usia lima tahun pada tarikh lahir dan bagi mendapatkan status vaksinasi lengkap, dua dos vaksin Sinovac akan diberikan kepada kanak-kanak lima hingga 11 tahun dengan selang masa empat minggu.

Dalam pada itu, Dr Noor Azmi berkata, walaupun vak-

sine Sinovac itu sudah diluluskan, namun vaksin Comirnaty (Pfizer) dengan formulari kanak-kanak adalah vaksin yang diberi keutamaan dalam Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan Kanak-Kanak (PICKids).

"Ia termasuk kanak-kanak yang mempunyai risiko tinggi dan ada komorbiditi seperti rendah imun, penyakit paru-paru kronik, penyakit jantung, kencing manis, obesiti dan penyakit lain," katanya.



SEORANG bapa memeluk serta menutup mata anaknya ketika petugas perubatan memberikan suntikan vaksin Covid-19 dos pertama di Pusat Pemberian Vaksin (PPV) Offsite Tapak Ekspo Seberang Jaya, kelmarin. - Gambar NSTP/DANIAL SAAD

Putrajaya: Individu yang sudah dijangkiti Covid-19 serta selesai menjalani kuarantin tidak perlu membuat ujian ulangan bagi memastikan tiada lagi virus berkenaan di dalam badan.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, ini kerana ujian seperti *Real-Time Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction* (RT-PCR) itu sensitif dan akan mengesan kehadiran

Tidak perlu ulang ujian selepas kuarantin

genetik virus berkenaan. "RT-PCR ini sensitif dan akan mengesan kehadiran genetik itu dalam saluran pernafasan dalam tempoh dua hingga tiga bulan selepas dijangkiti, misalnya dalam tempoh *viral shedding*."

"Namun virus berkenaan sudah tidak dapat membiak dan individu itu (dijangkiti Covid-19) tidak mungkin

boleh menyebarkan jangkitan kepada orang lain," katanya.

Tambah Dr Noor Hisham, seseorang itu boleh dijangkiti Covid-19 jika mereka berada berdekatan dengan pesakit Covid-19 yang batuk atau bersin dan virus itu boleh tersebar terutamanya antara individu yang mempunyai kontak rapat.

"Jangkitan berlaku apabila

titisan mengandungi virus dihirup melalui udara atau bersentuhan langsung dengan mata, hidung atau mulut seseorang. Virus ini lebih mudah merebak dalam persekitaran tertutup yang kurang ventilasi dan sesak.

"Ujian RTK antigen (RTK-Ag) biasanya boleh mengesan jangkitan pada hari ketiga hingga ketujuh

selepas seseorang terdedah kepada pesakit Covid-19, manakala RT-PCR boleh mengesan jangkitan seawal hari kedua hingga hari-14 selepas dijangkiti.

"Justeru itu, ketepatan ujian RTK-Ag dan RT-PCR bergantung kepada tempoh jangkitan sewaktu sampel diambil. Penggunaan RTK-Ag disarankan kepada individu bergejala atau ber-

ada dalam kumpulan berisiko tinggi sekiranya tidak bergejala," katanya.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, KKM meluluskan penggunaan RTK-Ag sebagai suatu kaedah alternatif pengujian Covid-19 selain RT-PCR.

"Ini kerana RTK-Ag membantu memudahkan proses pengesanan dan pengawalan jangkitan Covid-19 kerana kaedah ini adalah ringkas, mudah, murah dan boleh dilakukan di lapangan," katanya.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 30

RUANGAN : VAKSIN UNTUK RAKYAT

Pilihan vaksin CoronaVac untuk kanak-kanak bermula hari ini

SHAH ALAM - Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) akan mula menawarkan vaksin CoronaVac untuk kanak-kanak di pusat pemberian vaksin yang terpilih di seluruh negara bermula hari ini.

Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan 1, Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali berkata, kerajaan telah meluluskan penggunaan CoronaVac sebagai vaksin kedua untuk kanak-kanak berusia 5 hingga 11 tahun selepas vaksin Comirnaty (Pfizer-BioNTech).

Ia sekali gus memberikan pilihan kepada ibu bapa sekiranya anak-anak mereka tidak boleh menerima vaksin Comirnaty atas sebab kesihatan atau jika mereka tidak bersetuju untuk meng-

gunakan vaksin Comirnaty.

Menurutnya, Mesyuarat Pihak Berkuasa Kawalan Dadah yang ke 370 pada 3 Mac yang lalu telah memberi kelulusan bersyarat penggunaan CoronaVac Suspension for Injection Covid-19 Vaccine (Vero Cell), Inactivated keluaran Sinovac Life Sciences Co. Ltd., China dan Pharmaniaga Lifescience Sdn. Bhd., Malaysia untuk kanak-kanak 5 hingga 11 tahun.

"Vaksin CoronaVac hanya boleh diberi apabila kanak-kanak mencapai usia 5 tahun pada tarikh lahir. Bagi mendapatkan status vaksinasi lengkap, dua



DR NOOR AZMI

dos vaksin CoronaVac dengan selang masa 4 minggu perlu diberikan kepada kanak-kanak berumur 5-11 tahun.

"Mulai 7 Mac (hari ini), Kementerian Kesihatan akan mula menawarkan vaksin CoronaVac di Pusat Pemberian Vaksin yang terpilih. Ibu bapa boleh menyemak senarai nama serta waktu operasi Pusat

Pemberian Vaksin yang menawarkan CoronaVac secara *walk-in* di laman web Kementerian Kesihatan dan PHCorp yang telah diumumkan sebelumnya.

"Ibu bapa yang mendaftarkan anak dalam aplikasi MySejahtera pula akan

menerima pautan kepada tempahan janji temu vaksinasi anak-anak mereka.

"Penawaran vaksin CoronaVac di PPV yang dikendalikan oleh KKM dan PHCorp di bawah PICKids adalah percuma. Selain dari program PICKids, terdapat juga klinik dan hospital swasta yang menawarkan vaksin CoronaVac kepada kanak-kanak 5 hingga 11 tahun dengan bayaran," katanya dalam satu kenyataan pada Ahad.

Berdasarkan data dalam CovidNow, sehingga Sabtu, jangkitan Covid-19 dalam kalangan kanak-kanak berusia bawah 12 tahun menunjukkan peningkatan ketara apabila 123,053 orang disahkan positif virus itu semenjak Januari 2022.

Pembukaan sempadan pulihkan ekonomi negara

Bagaimanapun tindakan itu perlu dilakukan sebaik mungkin mengikut SOP ditetapkan KKM

Oleh HAZELN LIANA KAMARUDIN

KOTA BHARI

Langkah kerajaan untuk membuka semula sempadan negara mampu menghidupkan ekonomi Malaysia yang terkesan akibat pandemik Covid-19.

Menteri di Jabatan Perdana Menteri (Ekonomi), Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed berkata, bagaimanapun tindakan itu perlu dilakukan dengan sebaik mungkin mengikut prosedur operasi standard (SOP) yang telah ditetapkan oleh Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM).

"Persiapan mantap ini penting sebelum pengumuman berkaitan dengan perkara (sempadan) itu diambil.



Mustapa (tengah) merasmikan majlis pelancaran Program Transformasi Digital Pasar Besar Siti Khadijah pada Ahad.

"Apa yang penting golongan peniaga sudah tahu berkaitan dengan pembukaan sempadan dan mereka boleh membuat persediaan sewajarnya," katanya selepas merasmikan majlis pelancaran Program Transformasi Digital Pasar Besar Siti Khadijah di sini pada Ahad.

Hadir sama Exco Perindustrian, Perdagangan, Pelaburan Dan Pembangunan Usahawan Kelantan, Datuk Hanifa Ahmad.

Menurutnya, selagi sempadan negara tidak dibuat ia akan merumitkan pemulih-

an ekonomi negara pada masa hadapan.

Beliau berkata, pembukaan sempadan negara merupakan salah satu syarat proses pemulihan semula ekonomi negara.

Ahli Parlimen Jeli itu berkata, beberapa negara lain seperti Thailand, Kemboja, Indonesia dan Brunei sudah bersetuju dengan cadangan pembukaan sempadan.

"Pengumuman mengenai perkara ini (sempadan) mungkin mengambil masa, kerana kita tidak mahu wujudnya situasi beratur panjang (untuk masuk) selain mengekang penularan jangkitan," katanya.

Keputusan tutup PPV Mega mulai 16 Mac memandangkan kos sewa tinggi - Khairy

PONTIAN - Keputusan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) untuk menutup semua Pusat Pemberian Vaksin (PPV) Mega mulai 16 Mac ini memandangkan penyewaan lokasi pusat itu membabitkan kos yang tinggi.

Menterinya, Khairy Jamaluddin berkata, pihaknya mendapati bahawa penyewaan lokasi PPV Mega tidak lagi *cost-effective*

memandangkan ia melibatkan dewan-dewan persidangan yang besar.

"Apabila kita menyewa dewan persidangan ini kita perlu bayar, bukannya percuma jadi kita dah guna sepenuhnya. Sekarang ini tidak ada keperluan lagi untuk kita kekalkan PPV Integrasi ataupun PPV Mega.

"Selepas ini hanya memadai untuk kita buat sediakan yang lebih kecil contohnya

di klinik swasta dan klinik kesihatan," katanya kepada pemberita selepas melawat Klinik Kesihatan Serkat, Kukup dekat sini pada Ahad.

Khairy berkata, kehadiran penerima vaksin juga tidak lagi seramai sebelum ini dan mungkin disebabkan sebahagian besar penduduk telah menerima vaksinasi. - *Bernama*

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 35

RUANGAN : SINAR NEGERI . PAHANG . SELANGOR/KL . N.SEMBILAN

40,150 kanak-kanak di Pahang telah divaksin

Daerah Cameron Highlands catat liputan tertinggi dengan 38.2 peratus

Oleh NIK AMIRUL MU'MIN
NIK MIN

KUANTAN

Seramai 40,150 kanak-kanak telah menerima suntikan vaksin melalui Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan Kanak-Kanak (PICKKids) di negeri ini hingga Sabtu.

Pengarah Kesihatan Negeri Pahang, Datuk Dr Nor Azimi Yunus berkata, jumlah itu kira-kira

20.8 berbanding 192,600 kanak-kanak yang disasarkan.

Menurutnya, daerah Cameron Highlands mencatatkan jumlah liputan tertinggi dengan 38.2 peratus.

"Enam daerah mempunyai liputan 20 hingga 30 peratus iaitu Bera (27.2 peratus), Raub (25.3

peratus), Bentong (25.2 peratus), Kuantan (24.1 peratus), Temerloh (22.5 peratus) dan Jerantut (21.1 peratus)," katanya dalam kenyataan pada Ahad.

Dr Nor Azimi berkata, dalam pelaksanaan PICKKids di negeri ini, terdapat 133 pusat pemberian vaksin (PPV) beroperasi dengan kapasiti keseluruhan 5,075 dos sehari.



DR NOR AZIMI

"Daripada jumlah PPV yang beroperasi, 46 PPV sekolah, PPV klinik kesihatan (67), PPV awam (1), PPV off site (8) dan 18 pasukan jangkau luar (outreach) sekolah," katanya.

Tambah beliau, ketika ini terdapat enam PPV yang memberikan suntikan

secara walk in iaitu di Dewan Eng Choon dan UNIKlinik IM2 di Kuantan, Dewan Jubli Perak Raub, Dewan Kuala Rompin, Dewan Tun Razak Temerloh dan di Pusat Latihan Kesihatan Mentakab.

Program PICKKids untuk kanak-kanak berusia lima hingga 11 tahun di lancarkan 3 Februari lalu manakala di Pahang bermula pada 7 Februari.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : NEWS / N STORY OF THE DAY



Norazalin Taharin, 45, snapping a picture with her son, Nor Hifly Norhasdi, 8, after he received a dose of a Covid-19 vaccine at the Tapak Ekspo vaccination centre in Seberang Jaya on Saturday. PIC BY DANIAL SAAD

A SECOND OPTION

KIDS CAN GET SINOVAC VACCINE FROM TODAY

List of centres that offer CoronaVac jab via walk-in available on Health Ministry, PHCorp websites

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THE Health Ministry is offering Sinovac's CoronaVac Suspension for Injection Covid-19 Vaccine (Vero Cell), inactivated from today under the Covid-19 National Immunisation Programme for Children (PICKids) at selected centres.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali said children who could not receive the Comirnaty (Pfizer) vaccine for health reasons would be offered the CoronaVac jab.

Parents could also opt for the CoronaVac vaccine for their children if they did not want the Comirnaty vaccine.

"Parents can see the list of vaccination centres that offer the CoronaVac vaccine via walk-in on the Health Ministry and PHCorp websites.

"Two doses of the CoronaVac

vaccine will be administered at an interval of four weeks for complete vaccination," he said yesterday.

The Sinovac-made vaccine was approved for children aged 5 to 11 earlier this month.

According to the CovidNow portal, up to Saturday 123,053 children aged 12 and under have been infected by the virus and more than a million children aged 5 to 11 have received the first dose of a Covid-19 vaccine.

The data showed that 1,003,227 doses had been administered, including 28,149 on Saturday.

A total of 28.3 per cent of registered children have received a dose of the vaccine. Sarawak had the highest child vaccination rate at 54.3 per cent, while Kelantan had the lowest at 8.0 per cent.

Daily new Covid-19 cases hit a new record of 33,406 on Saturday, bringing the total to 3,595,172.

Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said of the new cases, 33,192 (99.36 per cent) were in categories 1 and 2.

"The remaining 214 are in categories 3 to 5," he said yesterday.

Of the new patients in categories 3 to 5, 60 were unvaccinated or had incomplete vaccination, 101 had completed primary vaccination but had yet to receive a booster dose and 53 had received a booster shot.

Of the new cases, 96 patients

were aged 60 and above, 70 had comorbidities and one is pregnant.

Dr Noor Hisham said the Covid-19 infectivity rate (Rt) was rising, going from 1.02 on Friday to 1.05 on Saturday.

He said the Rt in Sarawak was at 1.41, Perak was at 1.26 and Kuala Lumpur was at 1.25.

A total of 371 patients were in intensive care units (ICU), involving 131 confirmed Covid-19 cases, and the remainder were under investigation.

Dr Noor Hisham said 226 patients were intubated and 27,143 more Covid-19 patients had been discharged.

Up to Saturday, the ICU bed-use rate for Covid-19 patients in two federal territories and five states was above 50 per cent — Putrajaya (83 per cent), Kuala Lumpur (65 per cent), Johor (65 per cent), Perlis (64 per cent), Selangor (62 per cent) and Perak (55 per cent).

Eleven new Covid-19 clusters were discovered, bringing the number of active clusters to 474.

A total of 67 people died from Covid-19 on Saturday, including 23 brought-in-dead cases, raising the death toll to 33,173.

Page 1 pic: A child with his guardian at the World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur vaccination centre on Friday.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 3

RUANGAN : NATION / NEWS

'UNVAXXED FACE HIGHER HEART RISK'

Chances of getting myocarditis or pericarditis after vaccination very low, says cardiologist

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UNVACCINATED people are at higher risk of developing myocarditis or severe heart-related symptoms associated with Covid-19 compared with those fully vaccinated or who have received a booster shot against the virus.

Dr Dharmaraj Karthikesan, consultant interventional cardiologist at Sultanah Bahiyah Hospital in Alor Star, said the benefits of Covid-19 vaccines outweighed the risk of adverse events following immunisation (AEFI).

"Some people are scared of getting (Covid-19) vaccine-induced myocarditis. But a person (not fully vaccinated) infected with Covid-19 has a higher chance of getting myocarditis or severe symptoms than someone who is fully vaccinated against the virus.

"Therefore, it is evident that the benefits of getting vaccinated against the virus are as high as a mountain compared with the risk of getting AEFI, which is as small as a grain," said Dr Dharmaraj.

Myocarditis and pericarditis are the two rare heart-related adverse events of special interest (AESI) that may develop in recipients of Covid-19 vaccines that use messenger RNA technology, like the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

He said the chances of getting myocarditis or pericarditis are very low, about 1.2 cases in one million doses.

He said myocarditis involved inflammation of the muscle of the heart, and pericarditis involved swelling of the pericardium, the

outer layer covering the heart.

There is also myopericarditis, which is inflammation of the heart muscle and pericardium.

Myocarditis symptoms include chest pain, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, dizziness or feeling faint and palpitations or irregular heartbeat.

"If there is inflammation of the outer layer of the heart, people will experience chest pain that changes depending on the position of their body and change in their breathing, such as more pain when taking a deep breath.

"An example is people's chest pain worsening when they lie down, but the pain eases or disappears when they sit up and lean forward. These are classic pericarditis symptoms."

He said symptoms of myocarditis and pericarditis were most

likely to develop between the first and fifth day after receiving the second dose of a vaccine, but incidents were very rare.

He said people under age 30 and men were more likely than other groups to develop myocarditis or pericarditis.



Dr Dharmaraj
Karthikesan

"It is very difficult to predict because everyone has different immune responses and each individual is unique."

Dr Dharmaraj said his patients asked whether someone who had heart disease, had undergone bypass surgery or had a stent or balloon inserted in the heart had a higher chance of getting myocarditis.

He said the answer was no. "You should get the vaccine if you have heart disease, diabetes and other diseases. If you are not vaccinated, you are at a higher

risk of suffering from severe complications and mortality."

To minimise the risk of developing heart-related AESI, he recommended avoiding strenuous activities or exercise for at least one to two weeks after the second dose.

"Based on our observation, many people who seek treatment for myocarditis were involved in (heavy) activities like marathons, hiking or long-distance cycling.

"Please avoid that for at least one to two weeks after getting your shots."

He urged those who experienced myocarditis symptoms to immediately seek treatment at hospitals.

"Doctors will carry out an ECG (electrocardiogram) test to check the damage to your heart muscle.

"They will run a blood test to confirm the diagnosis."

He said most people who develop myocarditis would fully recover after treatment and their heart would return to normal.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 13

RUANGAN : LETTERS

RISE IN CHILDREN'S CASES

Early detection, diagnosis of MIS-C vital

In Malaysia, young Covid-19 patients admitted to hospitals have been on the rise: 50,826 children under 12 have tested positive since the middle of last month.

Thirty-one per cent of them were in category 1 (asymptomatic), 68.6 per cent in category two (symptomatic, no pneumonia), and less than one per cent of cases in categories three to five (symptomatic, with pneumonia, requiring supplemental oxygen or critically ill with multi-organ involvement).

Children were initially reported to be less susceptible to Covid-19.

However, in April 2020, reports of children with a severe inflammatory sickness arose in Italy, the United Kingdom and New York as a possible post-infectious consequence of SARS-CoV-2 infection.

The United States' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organisation coined the term Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) to describe this novel pediatric disease.

Not much is known about MIS-C, including its cause and risk factors, so it is classified as a syndrome (a collection of signs and symptoms) rather than a disease.

Although the majority of children who contracted Covid-19 develop minor sickness, some develop MIS-C with organs and tissues — including heart, lungs, blood vessels, kidneys, digestive system, brain, skin, and eyes — becoming severely inflamed.

Signs and symptoms among



Vaccination boosts protection against Covid-19 and lowers the risk of serious disease. PIC BY ASWADI ALIAS

children who have MIS-C vary depending on which body parts are affected.

CDC said 6,851 people with MIS-C were documented up to Jan 31

this year, with 0.9 per cent of them succumbing to the disease.

In Malaysia, the MIS-C Malaysia Study Group said 174 children were diagnosed with MIS-C after con-

tracting the coronavirus between June 2020 and December last year.

Children aged 5 to 9 were involved in 64 cases; 38 cases involved children aged 1 to 5; 36

cases involved children aged 9 to 12; 25 cases involved children under 1; and 11 cases involved children over 12.

In Malaysia, seven children aged 18 and under died of MIS-C caused by Covid-19 infections.

The mortality rate in Malaysia is estimated to be four per cent mainly because the young patients were brought to healthcare facilities late.

MIS-C is a relatively uncommon illness and the majority of children who have it improve with treatment. However, some children deteriorate fast.

Vaccination is one of the best strategies to keep children safe.

Clinical studies have shown that the vaccine is 91 per cent effective in children aged five to 11, and that it can boost protection against Covid-19 while lowering the risk of serious disease.

MIS-C symptoms include a fever that lasts 24 hours or more, inflammation throughout the body, and issues with organs (multisystem), including the intestines, heart, brain, lungs, skin and kidneys.

Blood clot formation is a possibility too.

Early detection and diagnosis of MIS-C, as well as prompt treatment, will result in favourable outcomes.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
DR CHING SIANG TAN
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
DR LONG MIN**

Penang

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NATION

Long Covid certifiable as disability

Patients must meet the criteria for functional impairment, says doctor

PETALING JAYA: Some Covid-19 long haulers may qualify as disabled if a registered medical practitioner finds that they fulfil the criteria for certification as a person with disability (PWD).

Hospital Sungai Buloh rehabilitation medicine department head Dr Akmal Hafizah Zamli said the registration for PWD with the Welfare Department is based on the degree of function affected, and not based on the medical diagnosis or disease.

"Hence, if the Covid-19 long hauler is disabled and fulfils the criteria for certification as a PWD by a registered medical practitioner, he or she can be recognised as one.

"However, this is not a decision

under the Health Ministry," she told *The Star*.

As many long haulers are unable to return to work, countries like the United States have recognised long Covid-19 symptoms as a disability under federal law so that they qualify for services.

In November 2021, Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said that the Health Ministry is working with the Human Resources Ministry and other groups to give better care to people with long Covid-19 symptoms.

These include providing rehabilitation equipment and Social Security Organisation (Socso) payments to those who are eligible in the future.

Dr Akmal Hafizah said that col-

laboration between the Health Ministry's Rehabilitation Medicine Services and Socso has been ongoing.

"These include, but are not limited to, initiatives such as the empowerment of survivors with impairments under the Socso Return to Work (RTW) Programme, provision of intensive and holistic care based on the survivor's unique requirements and supporting those clinically indicated with appropriate rehabilitation aids and devices," she said.

Financial benefits are also available for those who qualify, while some insured individuals can also be enrolled for intensive programmes provided at the main Perkeso Tun Abdul Razak Rehabilitation Centre in Melaka or

at satellite branches.

"Long Covid-19 survivors are referred for confirmation of eligibility for these services or benefits by rehabilitation medicine clinicians at the Health Ministry using the online INSPIRE system," said Dr Akmal Hafizah.

The Health Ministry is also currently continuing to research long Covid-19, with one upcoming study involving nationwide data collection using the MySejahtera app platform, she said.

"It is research by infectious diseases physicians and the Institute for Clinical Research and Centre of Disease Control titled 'Long Covid in Malaysia: A Longitudinal Prospective Cohort Study'.

"It will involve nationwide data collection using the MySejahtera

platform and has received approval from the Medical Research and Ethics Committee (MREC).

"It is currently being incorporated into the MySejahtera app and is expected to be rolled out soon," she said.

Despite the various programmes put in place by the government to help long Covid-19 patients, Dr Akmal Hafizah said the best way to avoid long Covid-19 is to prevent an infection.

She advised Malaysians to continue strict adherence to Covid-19 standard operating procedures, get vaccinated and adopt a healthy lifestyle.

"This is the best way to prevent Covid-19 and protect those around you," said Dr Akmal Hafizah.

Over a million under-12s vaxxed

KUALA LUMPUR: A total of 1,003,227 children aged five to 11, or 28.3% of the age group, have received their first dose of the vaccine under the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme for Children (PICKids).

Based on the CovidNow website as well, 14,984,241 adults (or 63.7%) have received the booster dose, 22,927,098 (or 97.4%) are fully vaccinated, while 23,203,753 (or 98.6%) have received at least one jab.

A total of 2,830,746 (or 91%) of those aged 12 to 17 are fully vaccinated, while 2,930,978 (or 94.2%) have received at least one jab.

A total of 68,081 Covid-19 vaccine doses were dispensed on Saturday, with 29,714 being the first dose, 903 the second dose and 37,464 the booster dose, bringing the cumulative total under the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme to 67,672,349.

According to the Health Ministry's GitHub portal, there were 67 deaths, with 14 in Selangor followed by Kedah (12), Johor (10), Perak (eight), Sabah (seven), Melaka and Perlis (four each).

Pahang and Kelantan had three cases each, while Negri Sembilan and Penang had one each. — Bernama



Jabbed for protection: Casey Ng Jia Yee, 9, getting her first Covid-19 vaccine dose at Axiata PPV Kuala Lumpur. — LOW LAY PHON/The Star

Treatment is based on health condition

PETALING JAYA: As more people continue to suffer from long Covid, health experts here say that treatment is prescribed based on their health issue.

There are currently 28 public hospitals, four teaching hospitals and six private healthcare facilities offering post-Covid-19 rehabilitation.

Associate Prof Dr Tan Toh Leong, who sees Covid-19 patients daily, said long Covid is not uncommon and affects one in 10 patients.

"Usually, those with light symptoms like fatigue, gastric, diarrhoea or chronic cough, will just be treated according to their symptoms," the Canselor Tuanku Muhriz Hospital consultant emergency physician said in an interview.

He said the treatment for long Covid is focused on rehabilitation and that hospitals with a rehabilitative unit will be able to provide the right care based on the patient's condition.

For example, he said, those who were on ventilators for a long time would be given heart and lung function rehabilitation, while those who suffer from depression are referred for psychotherapy.

Association of Private Hospitals Malaysia (APHM) president Datuk Dr Kuljit Singh said: "Not all long Covid patients need rehabilitation, some may need other kinds of treatment. It depends on whether it involves the heart, lung or vessels."

"Private hospitals are capable of managing this depending on the condition," he added.

Dr Kuljit said those with comorbidities were more prone to suffer from long Covid compared to those without.

He advised those with comorbidities to see their doctor regularly and to refrain from self-medicating with over-the-counter medication.

Support is available for long haulers

PETALING JAYA: Covid-19 long haulers suffer an array of symptoms, with less than 70% of those referred to the rehabilitation unit at Hospital Sungai Buloh returning to work within three months of recovery.

Measures have been put in place by the Health Ministry to support long Covid sufferers, with at least 5,856 of them benefiting from rehabilitation at the ministry's facilities, including Sabah and Sarawak.

Hospital Sungai Buloh rehabilitation medicine department head Dr Akmal Hafizah Zamli said its Covid-19 Rehabilitation Outpatient Specialised Services (CROSS) was established in November 2020 as the first rehabilitation medicine service dedicated to long Covid sufferers in the country.

According to the CROSS database from November 2020 to January 2022 of mainly Category 4 and 5 Covid-19 patients aged 13 to 89, 62.4% (or 2,987) continued to have symptoms after more than three

months.

"Analysis of the CROSS database also revealed that from the total cohort of 2,987 patients, 1,470 out of 2,220 applicable patients, or 66.2%, successfully returned to work in less than three months.

"Meanwhile, the reasons for not returning to work are wide-ranging, including loss of job as the company had reduced operations or closed down due to the economic impact of the pandemic, trauma and fear of contracting the infection again, lack of new job opportunities and also still recovering from the after-effects of Covid-19 or long Covid.

"Common symptoms of long Covid are wide-ranging, with the most common being fatigue, exertional dyspnoea, cough, pain, insomnia, muscle weakness, abnormal sensations, anxiety, brain fog and hair loss," Dr Akmal Hafizah told *The Star*.

Long Covid sufferers can seek treatment at any of the 2,838 government clinics nationwide and

there are also close to 30 public hospitals with rehabilitation medicine clinical services, she said.

At the government clinic, assessment and management of long Covid patients is led by a family medicine specialist (FMS), while for complex cases, the patient may be referred to the various medical specialties or integrated multidisciplinary services as indicated during the assessment of the individual cases, she added.

Depending on the symptoms, patients may be referred to specialists in different fields such as respiratory, emergency, cardiology, neurology, psychiatry and rehabilitation.

"The Clinical Guideline Post Covid-19 Management Protocol, Ministry of Health Malaysia First Edition July 2021 is used to guide referrals by the government clinic to the various medical specialties for management," she added.

Patients in need of rehabilitation services may be those who have

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NATION

CoronaVac option for kids

The inactivated vaccine is now available at selected centres

PETALING JAYA: Children aged five to 11 who are unable to receive the Comirnaty vaccine for health reasons will be offered the CoronaVac vaccine from today, says the Health Ministry.

"Parents who do not want their children to get the Comirnaty vaccine (from Pfizer-BioNTech) can opt to give their children the CoronaVac vaccine," said Deputy Health Minister Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali.

He said CoronaVac would be available at selected vaccination centres.

The CoronaVac Suspension for Injection Covid-19 Vaccine (Vero Cell) Inactivated was approved for children aged five to 11 by the Drug Control Authority last Thursday. The vaccine is produced by Sinovac Life Sciences Co Ltd China and Pharmaniaga Lifescience Sdn Bhd.

"Parents can check the list of centres offering the CoronaVac vaccine on a walk-in basis on the Health Ministry's website or ProtectHealth Corporation's website," he said in a statement yesterday.

Dr Noor Azmi said two doses of the CoronaVac vaccine, administered with an interval of four weeks, would be needed to be fully vaccinated.

"Based on data in CovidNow as at March 5, the Covid-19 infection rate

among children under the age of 12 has shown a significant increase.

"In January this year, the ministry granted approval for the Comirnaty vaccine for children with underlying health conditions including low immunity, chronic lung disease, heart disease, diabetes and obesity, among others," he said.

CoronaVac was earlier approved for conditional use for individuals aged 12 and above.

Immigration DG: We're all set for border reopening

JOHOR BARU: All auto gates at international entry points have been reactivated in preparation for the reopening of borders, says Immigration director-general Datuk Seri Khairul Dzaimee Daud.

Immigration officers at international entry points who were previously sent to temporary depots during the pandemic period had been recalled, he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

The auto gates were reactivated on Saturday.

Khairul Dzaimee said the Immigration Department was ready for the reopening of the country's borders, especially to receive foreign tourists.

Among the main international entry points for this, he added, were the KL International Airport (KLIA) and the Sultan Iskandar Building in Johor.

"On March 5, all auto gates were reactivated and officers at international entry points who were previously sent to temporary depots during the pandemic period were recalled," he said during a joint operation with the Johor Immigration Department on Saturday night.

The department, said Khairul Dzaimee, expected an increase in the entry of foreign tourists, adding that control would be tightened to ensure there was no abuse of the social visit passes or over-staying.

"They (tourists) must submit proof that they have a place to stay in Malaysia, sufficient amount of money and a travel itinerary," he said.

On Saturday's operation, he said three premises here were raided, including a factory in Senai Industrial Park where 185 foreign workers were inspected.

A total of 64 Indian nationals registered under the Labour Recalibration (RTK) programme were arrested for working in unauthorised sector.

"Government policy does not allow Indian nationals to work in factories. They can only work in certain sectors.

"Preliminary investigations found that all the detained Indian workers were registered under the RTK programme in April 2021. We suspect that the factory used the services of agents to register the workers," said Khairul Dzaimee.

He said 16 workers from Nepal, Myanmar (three) and Bangladesh (two) were also detained for not having valid documents.

A total of 14 Thai, a Laos national and a Myanmar national were also detained in a raid at two spa centres that offered prostitution services.

All those detained were taken to the Immigration lock-up and the employers involved would be investigated under Section 55E of the Immigration Act.

KJ: Mega PPV not cost-effective due to high rental

PONTIAN: High rental for mega Covid-19 vaccination centres (PPV) is the reason why the Health Ministry decided to shut them down on March 16, says Health Minister Khairul Jamaluddin.

He said they found these centres, usually involving large convention halls, were too expensive.

"We have to pay to use them and now, there is no longer a need to keep operating from these integrated or mega PPV.

"Using smaller settings such as private or health clinics is sufficient," he told reporters after a visit to the Serkat Health Clinic in Kukup near here yesterday.

According to Bernama, Khairy said that there were now fewer Covid-19 vaccine recipients as the majority of the population had



On duty: Khairy (with cap) and Barisan Nasional's candidate for Kukup Datuk Jefferdin Atan (right) talking to nurses during a visit to the Serkat Health Clinic in Pontian. — Bernama

been inoculated.

"In Johor alone, over 70% have received their booster shots and as for the Covid-19 National Immunisation Programme for Children

(PICKids), it can be done in schools," he said.

On Saturday, Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah announced that all mega

PPV would close on March 16.

He said until that date, the PPV at the Axiata Arena in Bukit Jalil and the World Trade Centre would remain open for walk-ins.

'MySejahtera app useful to organ donors'

PETALING JAYA: If the MySejahtera is maintained and continues to be used by the public after the Covid-19 pandemic, it will be convenient for Malaysians to pledge to be an organ donor via the application, says Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye.

The former chairman of the Public Awareness Action Committee for Organ Donation said those who pledged to be organ donors would have a digital copy of the donor card in their app.

However, Lee pointed out that unless the government plans to retain MySejahtera as a permanent high security Digital ID for all citizens, it would be forgotten or discarded once the pandemic is over.

"It will be great if the government comes up with a long-term plan to retain MySejahtera for Covid-19 or for all health-related matters, including non-communicable diseases," he said.

214 new Covid-19 cases in categories three to five

KUALA LUMPUR: Some 214 cases out of the 33,406 new Covid-19 cases recorded in the country on Saturday were in categories three, four and five.

Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, in a statement yesterday, said the remaining 33,129 cases were in categories one and two, hence bringing the cumulative total of cases in the country to 3,595,172.

"Of the 214 cases in categories three to five, 60 cases involved unvaccinated individuals or those who have yet to complete vaccination, 101 cases were fully vaccinated but have not received the booster dose and 53 cases had received booster doses.

"As for categories one and two, 96 cases involved individuals aged 60 and above, 70 cases have comorbidities and one case involved a pregnant woman," he said, according to Bernama.

He said a total of 2,019 Covid-19 cases were admitted to hospitals on Saturday, comprising 772 cases in categories three to five and 1,247 cases in categories one and two.

Dr Noor Hisham also said that a total of 371 cases required treatment in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) with 226 cases requiring ventilator support, while 27,143 recoveries were reported yesterday, taking the cumulative total of recovered cases to 3,250,793.

On the ICU bed usage, he said seven states recorded bed utilisation of more than 50%, namely the Federal Territory (FT) of Putrajaya (83%), Johor and FT of Kuala Lumpur (65%), Perlis (64%), Kelantan (63%), Selangor (62%) and Perak (55%).

In addition, the country's infectivity rate (Rt) now stood at 1.05, with Sarawak recording the highest Rt at 1.41, followed by Perak (1.26), Kuala Lumpur (1.25) and Terengganu

(1.15), he said.

Dr Noor Hisham said as at Feb 18, a total of 128 self-test kits had received approval from the Medical Device Authority (MDA) and were available in pharmacies, health facilities and selected shops.

He said MDA continued to monitor the safety and performance of the approved self-test kits and urged the public to report any issues related to the test kits to the suppliers or MDA.

"The Health Ministry strongly recommends that the public optimise the use of RTK-Ag self-test to detect Covid-19 infection and report the test results through the MySejahtera application.

"This measure is important to ensure that the community can carry out daily activities safely and help the country continue its socio-economic recovery and growth more sustainably," he added.

AKHBAR : THE SUN ON MONDAY
 MUKA SURAT : 4
 RUANGAN : NEWS WITHOUT BORDERS

More than one million children vaccinated

KUALA LUMPUR: A total of 1,003,227 children aged between five and 11 (28.3% of the age group) have received the first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine under the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme for Children (PICKids) as of Saturday.

The CovidNOW website showed 14,984,241 adults (63.7% of the population) have received a booster dose and 22,927,098 (97.4%) have completed their vaccination, while 23,203,753 (98.6%) have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

A total of 2,830,746 (91%) of adolescents between 12 and 17 have completed their vaccination, while 2,930,978 (94.2%) have received at least one dose. A total of 68,081 doses were administered on Saturday, with 29,714 as first doses, 903 as second shots and 37,464 as boosters, with the total doses given nationwide at 67,672,349.

A total of 67 Covid deaths were recorded on Saturday, with Selangor having 14, followed by 12 in Kedah, 10 in Johor, eight in Perak, seven in Sabah and four cases each in Malacca and Perlis. Pahang and Kelantan each recorded three deaths, while Negri Sembilan and Penang registered one each. - Bernama

Sinovac vaccine option for children

PUTRAJAYA: Children aged five to 11 will be offered the CoronaVac vaccine produced by Sinovac if parents object to them receiving the Comirnaty vaccine due to growing concerns over mRNA vaccines.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali said from today, the Health Ministry would start offering the CoronaVac vaccine for free but only at selected centres.

He said parents were now given the option to have their children receive the vaccine if they do not agree to the Comirnaty vaccine.

He added that parents could seek further clarification from health staff on duty at the vaccination centres.

"The CoronaVac vaccine can only be given to children who have reached the age of five. To obtain complete vaccination status, two doses, with an interval of four weeks, must be given."

Noor Azmi also said parents could check the operating hours and list of centres that offer CoronaVac on a walk-in basis on the ministry and PHCorp websites announced earlier.

In addition, parents who register their children via the MySejahtera app will receive a link to book vaccination appointments.

He added that the CoronaVac vaccines were being offered at centres operated by the ministry and PHCorp under the National Children's Covid-19 Immunisation Programme (PICKids).

He added that private clinics and hospitals also offered the CoronaVac vaccine for a fee.

On March 3, the government approved the use of CoronaVac vaccine for children aged five to 11, making it the second vaccine approved for the group.

Noor Azmi said the Comirnaty vaccine for children was approved on Jan 6 to ensure optimal protection against infection.

The vaccine is being given priority in PICKids, including for children at high risk or have comorbidities such as low immunity or are immunocompromised or obese, have chronic lung or heart disease, among others. - Bernama