AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 1
RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN

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RUU Kawalan Produk Merokok diteliti semula

Oleh Rohaniza Idris
roha@bh.com.my

Kuala Lumpur: Rang Undang-undang (RUU) Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2023 akan dirujuk sekali lagi kepada Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas (JKPK) Kesihatan Parlimen untuk penelitian lanjut.

Ini bermakna ia kali kedua RUU yang turut dikenali sebagai RUU Generasi Penamat (GEG) dirujuk kepada JKPK selepas pertama kali dibentangkan tahun lalu oleh Menteri Kesihatan ketika itu, Khairy Jamaluddin.

Nasional 6

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 6
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Dr Zaliha pada sesi soal jawab Persidangan Dewan Rakyat di Bangunan Parlimen, semalam. (Foto BERNAMA)

Langkah teliti akta, syor pelbagai pihak

Dari Muka 1

Semalam, Menteri Kesihatan, Dr Zaliha Mustafa mencadangkan perkara itu berdasarkan Peraturan 54 (1) Peraturan-Peraturan Majlis Mesyuarat Dewan Rakyat supaya ia dirujuk kepada jawatankuasa itu bagi membuat syor-syor, selain meneliti dasar GEG serta peruntukan berkaitan.

"Berdasarkan sesi libat urus dengan JKPK Kesihatan pada 6 Jun lalu bersama ahli Parlimen, badan profesional dan pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO), terdapat permintaan agar beberapa perkara dilihat dan diperhalusi lebih lanjut.

"Justeru, KKM mencadangkan ia dirujuk kepada JKPK Kesihatan untuk penelitian lanjut selain jawatankuasa ini yang berfungsi sebagai mekanisme semak dan imbang dengan ambil kira pandangan semua pihak," katanya pada persidangan Dewan Rakyat selepas membentangkan RUU itu bagi bacaan kali pertama.

Dr Zaliha juga menjelaskan, RUU itu adalah yang baharu selepas mengambil kira syor-syor perbincangan JKPK Kesihatan pada 2022 dan pertambahan pindaan baharu terhadap dasar GEG.

Beliau berkata, pembentangan bacaan kali pertama RUU itu serta cadangan untuk merujuk kepada JKPK Kesihatan adalah bukti komitmen kerajaan untuk memastikan peraturan baharu itu dapat diluluskan segera demi generasi baharu.

"Adalah penting untuk RUU ini mendapat sokongan tidak berbelah bahagi daripada semua pihak," katanya.

Kawal produk tembakau

Sementara itu, berdasarkan naskah biru yang diedarkan di Parlimen semalam, RUU itu bertujuan mengawal penjualan dan pembelian produk tembakau, bahan merokok, produk pengganti tembakau dan peranti merokok, demi kesihatan awam untuk melahirkan suatu generasi baharu bebas merokok.

Menurut Fasal 13 dan 14 RUU itu yang menyatakan larangan penjualan produk atau bahan merokok, pengganti tembakau atau peranti merokok kepada individu yang lahir mulai 1 Jan 2007 (generasi GEG), selain larangan individu GEG membeli produk rokok atau tembakau di bawah fasal sama.

RUU itu turut memperuntukkan denda tidak lebih RM20,000 atau penjara tidak lebih setahun jika didapati menjual produk berkenaan kepada individu yang lahir mulai 1 Januari 2007.

Selain ini, denda tidak lebih RM500 atau perintah khidmat masyarakat turut dikenakan kepada individu generasi GEG yang membeli produk berkenaan.

Pada Ogos tahun lalu, Parlimen meluluskan RUU Kawalan Produk Tembakau dan Merokok 2022 dirujuk ke JKPK Parlimen untuk diteliti serta membuat syor penambahbaikan.

Bagaimanapun, ia tidak dapat diteruskan berikutan pembubaran Parlimen bagi memberi laluan kepada Pilihan Raya Umum Ke-15 (PRU15).

MMA, CAP kecewa

Sementara itu, Persatuan Perubatan Malaysia (MMA) dan Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang (CAP) kecewa dengan keputusan merujuk semula RUU berkenaan kepada JKPK Kesihatan.

"Ini kerana RUU terbabit amat penting yang bakal menyelamatkan ratusan ribu nyawa generasi akan datang, khususnya pelajar, belia serta gadis muda daripada ketagih nikotin," kata Pegawai Pendidikan dan Aktivis Antimerokok CAP, NV Subbarow.

"Kementerian Kesihatan telah gagal untuk menunjukkan kepemimpinannya...ia kekecewaan terbesar kali kedua selepas kementerian mengecualikan nikotin daripada Akta Racun," kata Presiden MMA, Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai.

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

'PM, KKM bercanggah fakta isu vaksin'

Kuala Lumpur: Datuk Dr Radzi Jidin (PN-Putrajaya) membangkitkan percanggahan fakta berhubung perolehan vaksin COVID-19 apabila membandingkan kenyataan dibuat Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim dengan laporan diberikan Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, Lukanisman Awang Sauni di Dewan Rakyat.

Beliau berkata, Perdana Menteri pada Februari lalu mendakwa perolehan vaksin COVID-19 dibuat ketika pandemik tanpa persetujuan Peguam Negara dan ia bercanggah dengan fakta usul Kertas Putih Pengurusan Perolehan Vaksin COVID-19 dibentangkan Lukanisman minggu lalu.

"Ini (perolehan vaksin tanpa persetujuan Peguam Negara) disebut Perdana Menteri pada 8 Februari lalu, tetapi kita lihat dalam usul dibaca Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, "bahawa Dewan ini mengambil maklum perjanjian yang ditandatangani melalui proses semakan dan nasihat daripada Jabatan Peguam Negara (AGC)".

"Jadi siapa nak minta maaf dalam soal (percanggahan fakta) ini?" katanya ketika membahaskan usul Kertas Putih Pengurusan Perolehan Vaksin COVID-19 di Dewan Rakyat, semalam.

Pada 8 Februari lalu, Anwar dalam satu sidang media memaklumkan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) akan membentangkan Kertas Putih berhubung perolehan vaksin COVID-19 dan kos berkaitan, yang sebahagiannya dipercayai tidak mengikut peraturan dan ditandatangani tanpa persetujuan Peguam Negara.

Bekas Menteri Sains, Teknologi dan Inovasi, Khairy Jamaluddin, yang bertanggungjawab terhadap perolehan vaksin COVID-19 ketika pandemik, menafikan dakwaan terbabit dengan menegaskan semua perolehan dibuat ketika pentadbiran Perikatan nasional (PN) dibentangkan kepada Kabinet dan diketahui AGC.

Mengulas lanjut, Radzi menegaskan, insiden itu perlu dijadikan pengajaran oleh Perdana Menteri dan kerajaan untuk tidak gopoh membuat tuduhan serta kenyataan tanpa bukti yang jelas.

Selain itu, katanya, semua pihak perlu bermuhasabah apabila memilih membuat pelbagai tuduhan, kejian dan makian kepada kerajaan terdahulu ketika bergelut menangani krisis pandemik COVID-19.

Salur bantuan RM2.556 juta

Dalam perkembangan berasingan Lukanisman ketika menggulung perbahasan itu memaklumkan RM2.556 juta Bantuan Khas Kewangan Kesan Mudarat Vaksin COVID-19 sudah disalurkan kepada 150 pemohon sehingga 31 Mei lalu, berbanding 319 permohonan diterima.

Beliau menjelaskan, bantuan itu diberikan kepada pemohon yang menjadi penerima vaksin COVID-19 yang mempunyai Kesan Advers Susulan Imunisasi (AEFI) yang serius atau hilang upaya kekal serta waris penerima vaksin yang meninggal dunia.

Dalam perkembangan lain, katanya, sehingga 1 Jun lalu sebanyak 8.5 juta dos vaksin pelbagai jenama dilupus di fasiliti Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) dan gudang simpanan vaksin COVID-19.

Katanya, proses pelupusan dan pelaporan vaksin dalam simpanan dilaksanakan mengikut Tatacara Pengurusan Aset dan Tatacara Pengurusan Stor yang berkuat kuasa, dengan pemantauan status pelupusan juga dilaksanakan secara berkala.

Bagi sumbangan vaksin COVID-19 kepada negara luar pula, katanya, KKM menawarkan 1.89 juta dos vaksin kepada negara seperti Bangladesh, Myanmar, Laos dan Bosnia Herzegovina.

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 14
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

CAP terima aduan guru bimbang murid bawa vape ke sekolah

Georgetown: Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang (CAP) menerima aduan daripada 40 guru sekolah di negara ini yang meluahkan rasa bimbang mengenai pelajar dan murid berusia seawal sembilan tahun yang membawa peranti vape ke sekolah tanpa rasa takut.

Malah, seramai 30 ibu bapa di seluruh negara juga turut mengadu kepada CAP berhubung kebimbangan yang sama mengenai anak mereka.

Pegawai Pendidikan CAP dan Aktivis Anti Merokok, NV Subbarow berkata, keadaan itu dipercayai berlaku kerana sudah tiada peruntukan undang-undang bagi mengawalnya.

Selain mudah diperoleh, Subbarow berkata harganya yang murah serendah RM10 setiap satu juga menyebabkan ia mampu dimiliki pelajar dan murid.

"Ini bukan lagi tugas guru bagi menyemak isu yang membabitkan pelajar membawa vape ke sekolah kerana mereka juga ada perkara lain yang perlu diselesaikan.

"Hari demi hari ratusan kanak-kanak sekolah, pelajar, belia dan gadis muda sudah ketagihan nikotin ini," katanya dalam kenyataan semalam.

Subbarow mengulas Rang Undang-Undang (RUU) Kawalan Produk Merokok bersama peruntukan Generasi Penamat (GEG) yang sangat penting bagi menyelamat ratusan ribu generasi akan datang.

Makin ramai ketagih

Subbarow berkata, semakin lama Ahli Parlimen melambatkan mengenai perkara itu, semakin ramai penagih nikotin akan muncul.

Katanya, CAP juga tidak faham mengenai RUU berkenaan yang dirujuk sekali lagi kepada Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas Parlimen (PSC) tanpa perbahasan.

"Selepas mendengar mengenai kelewatan RUU tembakau akan diserah kepada PSC, ramai ibu bapa dan guru bimbang serta kecewa.

"Sehubungan itu, CAP menggesa Menteri Kesihatan supaya berusaha meluluskan RUU itu tanpa dalam persidangan Parlimen demi keselamatan generasi akan datang.

"Kami bimbang rakyat akan marah dengan Ahli Parlimen yang tidak memahami bahaya penjualan tembakau, vape dan 'jus nikotin beracun' yang dijual dengan mudah," katanya.

> "Hari demi hari ratusan kanak-kanak sekolah, pelajar, belia dan gadis muda sudah ketagihan nikotin ini"

NV Subbarow,
Pegawai Pendidikan CAP dan Aktivis Anti Merokok

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO
MUKA SURAT : 12
RUANGAN : LOKAL

7 klinik kesejahteraan bantu kesuburan lelaki

Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) menyediakan perkhidmatan tujuh klinik kesejahteraan lelaki bermula tahun lalu bagi membantu menangani masalah kesuburan golongan itu di negara ini.

Timbalan Menteri Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat Raj Munni Sabu berkata, perkhidmatan itu ditawarkan di Klinik Subfertiliti Kuala Lumpur, Klinik Subfertiliti Johor Bahru, Klinik Subfertiliti Pulau Pinang, Klinik Nur Sejahtera (KNS) Jalan Raja Laut, KNS Melaka, KNS Dungun dan KNS Sarawak.

"Ia adalah antara tiga inisiatif Lembaga Penduduk dan Pembangunan Keluara Negara (LPPKN) untuk mengatasi masalah kesuburan golongan lelaki di negara ini. Selain itu, kementerian juga menyediakan klinik subfertiliti LPPKN yang menawarkan perkhidmatan Prosedur Permanian Beradas (IUI), Pensenyawaan In-Vitro (IVF) dan *Intra Cytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI)*," katanya dalam sesi soal jawab di Dewan Rakyat, di sini, semalam.

Beliau menjawab soalan tambahan **Manndzri Nasib (BN-Tenggara)** yang ingin mengetahui apakah inisiatif khusus kerajaan untuk membantu lelaki yang mengalami masalah kesuburan.

Katanya, kerajaan turut mengadakan aktiviti melalui advokasi dan promosi serta pengecualian cukai bagi rawatan kesuburan sehingga RM6,000 selain bantuan program subsidi rawatan kesuburan yang kebanyakan disediakan untuk penjawat awam selain mereka turut boleh menuntut daripada majikan perbelanjaan rawatan itu.

Sementara itu, Raj Munni berkata, hasrat kerajaan untuk membantu pasangan di Malaysia bagi menangani masalah ketidaksuburan khususnya mereka yang berpendapatan sederhana dan rendah iaitu M40 dan B40 melalui perkhidmatan Subfertiliti LPPKN sudah mencapai objektif.

"Berdasarkan data, perkhidmatan ini yang diperkenalkan sejak 1979 hingga April lalu menunjukkan perkhidmatan Subfertiliti LPPKN mendapat sambutan memberangsangkan dan dalam tempoh berkenaan sebanyak 40,576 kes baharu direkodkan dengan 262,657 kes ulangan telah dicapai," katanya.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO
MUKA SURAT : 13
RUANGAN : LOKAL

BENTANG RUU KAWALAN PRODUK MEROKOK DEMI KESIHATAN AWAM 2023

Rujuk semula JKPK Kesihatan

Kuala Lumpur: Rang Undang-undang (RUU) Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2023 yang dibentangkan, semalam akan dirujuk sekali lagi kepada Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas (JKPK) Kesihatan.

Rujukan semula kepada JPPK itu juga bagi membolehkan dasar Generasi Penamat Rokok (GEG) seperti disyorkan banyak pihak dimasukkan sekali dalam RUU itu.

Ini kali kedua RUU berkenaan dirujuk kepada JKPK berkenaan selepas pertama kali dibentangkan oleh Menteri Kesihatan ketika itu, Khairy Jamaluddin pada tahun lalu.

Menteri Kesihatan, Dr Zaliha Mustafa ketika membentangkan RUU itu berkata, tindakan itu mengambil kira maklum balas yang diterima mengenai RUU berkenaan khususnya melalui sesi libat urus yang diadakan pada 6 Mac lalu.

Beliau memaklumkan melalui sesi pada minggu lalu itu ahli JKPK Kesihatan, selain Ahli Parlimen, badan profesional serta badan bukan kerajaan (NGO) mahu beberapa perkara di bawah RUU terbabit dinilai dan diperincikan lebih lanjut termasuk dasar GEG.

"Adalah penting untuk RUU ini mendapat sokongan tidak berbelah bahagi daripada semua pihak.

"Oleh itu, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mencadangkan RUU ini dirujuk kepada JKPK Kesihatan yang akan bertindak sebagai semak dan imbang serta mengambil kira pandangan semua pihak yang berkepentingan," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika membentangkan RUU itu untuk bacaan kali pertama di Dewan Rakyat, semalam.

Untuk rekod, antara pihak yang lantang meminta dasar GEG dilaksanakan dengan RUU berkenaan adalah Persatuan Kanser Kebangsaan Malaysia (NCSM)

RUU berkenaan dicadangkan bertujuan mengharamkan penggunaan, pembelian dan penjualan rokok serta produk vape kepada mereka yang dilahirkan selepas 2007.

Pada 26 Mei lalu, Dr Zaliha menyifatkan ia satu kejayaan buat KKM apabila mendapat sokongan Kabinet untuk RUU terbabit dibentangkan di Dewan Rakyat.

Ketika sesi taklimat bersama media pada 6 Jun pula, beliau berkata, KKM memasukkan semua 23 cadangan pindaan terdahulu serta lima cadangan baharu.

Justeru, katanya, RUU itu disifatkan lebih komprehensif dan meliputi bukan saja rokok konvensional, tetapi juga rokok alaf baharu termasuk rokok elektronik serta rokok *combustible*.

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 14
RUANGAN : NEGARA

Kekurangan aset dan petugas kesihatan selesai, dua wad kembali dibuka

Dua hospital di Johor dapat RM771,600

Oleh MOHD. HUSNI MOHD. NOOR

PUTRAJAYA – Sebanyak RM771,600 peruntukan diluluskan bagi pembelian aset perubatan dan bukan perubatan untuk keperluan mendesak di Hospital Sultan Ismail (HSI) dan Hospital Sultanah Aminah (HSA) di Johor Bahru.

Menteri Kesihatan, Dr. Zaliha Mustafa berkata, peruntukan khas yang diluluskan pihaknya itu bagi pembukaan semula dua wad di hospital berkenaan yang sebelum ini ditutup kerana kekurangan aset perubatan serta sumber manusia.

Menurutnya, antara keperluan aset yang disediakan termasuk set katil, Defib With Pacing, Basic Dinamp, Vital Sign 4 Channel, ECG Machine dan Portable X-Ray Viewer.

"Selain itu, waran peruntukan perbelanjaan mengurus berjumlah RM634,916 telah diturunkan juga kepada Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Johor bagi perolehan aset bukan perubatan (ABR) untuk memenuhi keperluan mendesak di kedua-dua hospital itu.

"JKN Johor juga akan menerima 35 jururawat perjawatan tetap dan perjawatan lain termasuk Penolong Perubatan Kesihatan dan beberapa jawatan kontrak lain sedang menunggu untuk disahkan," katanya dalam satu kenyataan semalam.

HOSPITAL Sultanah Aminah di Johor Bahru antara hospital yang menerima peruntukan khas KKM. – GAMBAR HIASAN

Katanya, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) juga akan melaksanakan penyelesaian segera bagi memenuhi keperluan dua buah hospital itu dan perkara itu sedang dalam tindakan KKM dengan kerjasama agensi pusat.

Beliau memberitahu, KKM sentiasa komited dalam isu kekurangan petugas kesihatan di fasiliti KKM, malah kemas kini data dan pemetaan turut dilaksanakan bagi mengenal pasti keperluan serta kehendak optimum operasi di mana-mana hospital mahupun klinik kesihatan.

"Kertas Putih Kesihatan yang akan dibentangkan di Parlimen esok (hari ini) penting bagi menjamin kesaksamaan dan akses perkhidmatan kesihatan yang lebih mampan serta kalis masa depan," katanya.

Sebelum ini, Menteri Besar Johor, Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi membuat lawatan mengejut ke HSI dan HSA Johor Bahru baru-baru ini.

Lawatan tersebut dibuat susulan penutupan dua wad dan 10 bilik pembedahan berikutan kekurangan aset perubatan serta sumber manusia terutama pegawai perubatan dan jururawat.

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 16
RUANGAN : NEGARA

Kes demam denggi menurun 6.9 peratus, tiga kematian

PUTRAJAYA – Jumlah kes demam denggi yang dilaporkan pada Minggu Epidemiologi (ME) ke-22 iaitu dari 28 Mei hingga 1 Jun, menurun 6.9 peratus iaitu 2,455 kes berbanding 2,638 kes pada minggu sebelumnya.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr. Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan berkata, tiga kematian dilaporkan akibat komplikasi demam denggi pada minggu tersebut.

Katanya, kes demam denggi yang dilaporkan sehingga kini adalah sebanyak 48,712 kes berbanding 18,883 kes bagi tempoh sama tahun lalu iaitu meningkat 29,829 kes atau 158.0 peratus, manakala sebanyak 34 kematian akibat komplikasi denggi dilaporkan berbanding 12 kematian bagi tempoh sama.

> Ia disusuli penyakit kencing manis 23 peratus, obesiti (23 peratus),hiperlipidemia (lapan peratus), penyakit jantung (tujuh peratus) dan penyakit buah pinggang (enam peratus)."

"Analisa kematian akibat komplikasi denggi bagi tempoh tiga tahun iaitu 2020 hingga 2022, paling tinggi direkodkan adalah pesakit mengalami penyakit kronik seperti darah tinggi iaitu 27 peratus.

"Ia disusuli penyakit kencing manis 23 peratus, obesiti (23 peratus),hiperlipidemia (lapan peratus), penyakit jantung (tujuh peratus) dan penyakit buah pinggang (enam peratus)," katanya dalam kenyataan akhbar semalam.

Jelasnya, bilangan lokaliti *hot spot* pada minggu tersebut meningkat sebanyak 82 lokaliti *hot spot* berbanding 72 lokaliti pada minggu sebelumnya.

"Ia melibatkan 62 lokaliti di Selangor, Pulau Pinang (sembilan), Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur dan Putrajaya (lima), Sabah (empat), manakala Kedah serta Perak masing-masing satu," ujarnya.

Beliau berkata, chikungunya pula merekodkan satu kes pada ME22 dan ia berlaku di Selangor menjadikan sebanyak 135 kes.

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : SINAR
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

PAC digesa siasat kos sebenar vaksin Covid-19

KUALA LUMPUR - Jawatankuasa Kira-kira Wang Negara (PAC) digesa menyiasat kos sebenar vaksin Covid-19 Pharmaniaga Berhad yang dibeli oleh Putrajaya.

Ahli Parlimen Kuala Selangor, Datuk Seri Dzulkefly Ahmad berkata, semasa perbahasan Kertas Putih Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) mengenai perolehan vaksin, enam negeri terpaksa membeli vaksin itu pada harga tinggi.

"Saya mahu menteri jawab mengenai perkara kewangan yang tidak didedahkan. Saya tahu bahawa perjanjian tanpa pendedahan (NDA) adalah sesuatu yang mesti kita patuhi tetapi saya fikir untuk PAC ia harus didedahkan.

"PAC adalah badan yang mempunyai kuasa perlembagaan dan locus standi dalam institusi Parlimen. Maklumat itu perlu diberikan supaya dapat membuat penilaian lengkap dan tepat," katanya yang memaklumkan Kertas Putih itu tidak mendedahkan kos vaksin terbabit.

Pada Februari lalu, Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim memaklumkan, KKM akan membentangkan Kertas Putih perolehan vaksin dan kos berkaitan yang sebahagiannya dipercayai tidak mengikut peraturan dan ditandatangani tanpa persetujuan Jabatan Peguam Negara.

Menteri Kesihatan, Dr Zaliha Mustafa pula berkata, Kertas Putih itu bukan untuk mencari kesalahan tetapi bagi menambah baik sistem kesihatan negara.

DZULKEFLY

AKHBAR : SINAR
MUKA SURAT : 10
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

RUU kawalan merokok dirujuk kepada JKPK Parlimen

KUALA LUMPUR - Rang Undang-Undang (RUU) Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2023 akan dirujuk kepada Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas (JKPK) Kesihatan Parlimen untuk penelitian lanjut.

Menteri Kesihatan, Dr Zaliha Mustafa mencadangkan perkara berkenaan berdasarkan Peraturan 54 (1) Peraturan-Peraturan Majlis Mesyuarat Dewan Rakyat supaya ia dirujuk kepada jawatankuasa itu bagi membuat syor-syor selain meneliti dasar Generasi Penamat (GEG) serta peruntukan berkaitan.

DR ZALIHA

Dr Zaliha menjelaskan, RUU itu adalah yang baharu selepas mengambil kira syor-syor perbincangan JKPK Kesihatan pada tahun 2022 dan pertambahan pindaan baharu terhadap dasar GEG.

"Berdasarkan sesi libat urus dengan JKPK Kesihatan pada 6 Jun lepas bersama ahli Parlimen, badan profesional dan pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO), terdapat permintaan agar beberapa perkara dilihat dan diperhalusi lebih lanjut.

"Justeru, KKM mencadangkan ia dirujuk kepada JKPK Kesihatan untuk penelitian lanjut selain jawatankuasa ini yang berfungsi sebagai mekanisme semak dan imbang dengan ambil kira pandangan semua pihak," katanya pada persidangan Dewan Rakyat selepas membentangkan RUU itu bagi bacaan kali pertama di sini pada Isnin.

Beliau berkata, pembentangan bacaan kali pertama RUU itu serta cadangan untuk merujuk kepada JKPK Kesihatan, bukti komitmen kerajaan dalam memastikan peraturan baharu itu dapat diluluskan segera demi generasi baharu.

Sementara itu, berdasarkan naskhah biru yang diedarkan di Parlimen pada Isnin, RUU itu bertujuan mengawal penjualan dan pembelian produk tembakau, bahan merokok, produk pengganti tembakau dan peranti merokok, demi kesihatan awam untuk melahirkan generasi baharu bebas merokok.

Menurut Fasal 13 dan 14 RUU itu yang menyatakan larangan penjualan produk atau bahan merokok, pengganti tembakau atau peranti merokok kepada individu yang lahir mulai 1 Januari 2007 (generasi GEG), selain larangan individu GEG membeli produk rokok atau tembakau di bawah fasal sama.

RUU itu turut memperuntukkan denda tidak lebih RM20,000 atau penjara tidak lebih setahun jika didapati menjual produk berkenaan kepada individu yang lahir mulai 1 Januari 2007.

Selain itu, denda tidak lebih RM500 atau perintah khidmat masyarakat turut dikenakan kepada mana-mana individu generasi GEG yang didapati membeli produk berkenaan. - *Bernama*

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

Beli vaksin: Nyawa rakyat jadi pertimbangan utama

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KUALA LUMPUR: Ancaman nyawa rakyat menjadi keutamaan kerajaan meskipun dilihat perjanjian perolehan vaksin dilihat berat sebelah.

Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, Lukanisman Awang Sauni berkata, perkara itu menjadi pertimbangan dengan memperlihatkan isu hidup mati manusia yang diancam wabak Covid-19 ketika itu.

Berikutan itu katanya, kerajaan membuat keputusan dengan meneruskan langkah melindungi rakyat daripada terus terjejas dengan wabak berkenaan.

"Kerajaan membuat keputusan dasar untuk memeterai perjanjian perolehan vaksin ini untuk menyegerakan proses tersebut kerana setiap nyawa rakyat Malaysia adalah berharga.

"Walaupun menyedari, atas nasihat Jabatan Peguam Negara yang perjanjian tersebut tidak memihak kepada kerajaan, kerajaan tetap perlu membuat keputusan dasar bagi meneruskan pembelian yang mendesak atas faktor kepentingan awam," katanya pada sesi penggulungan Laporan Kertas Putih mengenai pemerolehan vaksin Covid-19 di Dewan Rakyat, semalam.

> **"Walaupun menyedari atas nasihat Jabatan Peguam Negara yang perjanjian itu tidak memihak kepada kerajaan, kita tetap perlu membuat keputusan dasar bagi meneruskan pembelian yang mendesak."**

Malah, Lukanisman turut menjelaskan kerajaan tidak dapat memperincikan mengenai perjanjian tersebut kerana terikat dengan perjanjian berkaitan.

"Jika Malaysia tidak menandatangani dokumen ini, sebarang rundingan awal seperti syarat perjanjian atau bahan aktif (dalam vaksin) tidak akan dikongsi dengan Kerajaan Malaysia.

"Proses perolehan vaksin yang melibatkan Kementerian Kesihatan, Kementerian Kewangan dan Jabatan Peguam Negara adalah sesuatu yang tidak boleh dijangka, tetapi perlu dilakukan," jelasnya.

Beliau berkata demikian bagi menjawab soalan dikemukakan beberapa ahli Parlimen berkenaan Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA) di mana Kerajaan Malaysia terikat dengan klausa kerahsiaan yang ditetapkan syarikat pengeluar vaksin.

"Oleh itu, beberapa maklumat terperinci setiap perjanjian termasuk harga vaksin tidak boleh didedahkan kepada umum. Walau bagaimanapun, kos perolehan bagi setiap jenis vaksin telah dijelaskan dalam prosiding Jawatankuasa Kira-Kira Wang Negara (PAC), Mesyuarat Khas Parlimen Keempat Belas yang diadakan pada 2 Ogos 2021," katanya.

Dalam perkembangan berkaitan, Timbalan Menteri itu turut memaklumkan sehingga 30 Mei lalu, seramai 27,550,124 (84.4 peratus) rakyat Malaysia telah menerima dos primer lengkap manakala 16,335,715 (50.0 peratus) penduduk telah menerima dos penggalak pertama dan 823,495 (2.5 peratus) populasi telah menerima dos penggalak kedua.

Berbanding dengan beberapa negara lain, Malaysia kini hampir setara dengan pencapaian di Singapura (87.5 peratus) dan Filipina (87.5 peratus).

"Pencapaian Malaysia ini jauh lebih baik daripada negara-negara yang bermula program vaksinasi lebih awal seperti Israel (73.8 peratus), Amerika Syarikat (68.8 peratus), United Kingdom (74.6 peratus) dan Thailand (77.6 peratus)," jelasnya.

Berhubung Kesan Advers Susulan Imunisasi (AEFI), Lukanisman berkata, Bahagian Regulatori Farmasi Negara (NPRA) telah menerima sejumlah 26,717 laporan kesan vaksin Covid-19 melalui Sistem Pelaporan NPRA.

"Daripada jumlah itu, hanya sebilangan kecil iaitu 1,868 laporan bersamaan tujuh peratus adalah melibatkan kesan advers yang diklasifikasikan sebagai serius manakala majoriti iaitu 93 peratus laporan lagi adalah melibatkan kesan advers yang ringan sahaja," katanya.

RUU Kawalan Merokok dirujuk semula

KUALA LUMPUR: Rang Undang-Undang (RUU) Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2023 akan dirujuk kepada Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas Kesihatan (JKPK) buat kali kedua.

Sebelum ini, ia dibentangkan Menteri Kesihatan ketika itu, Khairy Jamaluddin pada tahun lalu.

Memaklumkan perkara itu, Menteri Kesihatan, Dr. Zaliha Mustafa berkata, beliau mengambil maklum respons mengenai RUU berkenaan daripada ahli Parlimen, badan profesional dan badan bukan kerajaan (NGO) serta sesi libat urus yang diadakan pada 6 Mac lalu.

"Adalah penting untuk RUU ini mendapat sokongan tidak berbelah bahagi daripada semua pihak," katanya semasa membentangkan RUU itu untuk bacaan kali pertama di Dewan Rakyat semalam.

Undang-undang itu dicadangkan bertujuan mengharamkan penggunaan, pembelian dan penjualan rokok dan produk vape kepada mereka yang dilahirkan selepas 2007.

Pada 26 Mei lalu, Dr. Zaliha menyifatkan perkara itu sebagai kejayaan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) apabila mendapat sokongan Kabinet untuk RUU terbabit dibentang.

Pada sesi taklimat bersama media 6 Jun pula, beliau berkata, KKM telah memasukkan semua 23 cadangan pindaan terdahulu serta lima cadangan baharu.

Lantas katanya, RUU itu disifatkan lebih komprehensif dan meliputi bukan sahaja rokok konvensional tetapi juga rokok alaf baharu termasuk elektronik serta rokok combustible.

ZALIHA Mustafa membentangkan RUU Kawalan Produk Merokok Kesihatan Awam 2023 di Dewan Rakyat semalam.

Kaji jadual penerbangan awal pagi

KUALA LUMPUR: Syarikat penerbangan perlu mengambil kira jadual penerbangan pada awal pagi bersesuaian dengan waktu solat bagi golongan muslim.

Timbalan Menteri Pengangkutan, Datuk Hasbi Habibollah berkata, ia merupakan cadangan baik yang boleh dibuat penambahbaikan demi kebaikan bersama antara pihak penerbangan dan juga penumpang.

"Saya dari Sarawak, waktu penerbangan 5.45 pagi, waktu subuh 5.20 pagi.

"Pihak syarikat penerbangan pun kena peka juga dan ambil kira peredaran waktu solat. Ia cadangan yang baik untuk kebaikan bersama," katanya di Dewan Rakyat semalam.

KKM lulus peruntukan khas dua hospital Johor

PUTRAJAYA: Kementerian Kesihatan meluluskan peruntukan khas sebanyak RM771,600 bagi pembelian aset perubatan dan bukan perubatan untuk keperluan Hospital Sultan Ismail (HSI) dan Hospital Sultanah Aminah (HSA) Johor Bahru.

Menterinya, Dr. Zaliha Mustafa berkata, peruntukan itu bagi pembukaan semula dua wad di hospital berkenaan yang ditutup kerana kekurangan aset perubatan dan sumber manusia.

"Selain itu, waran peruntukan perbelanjaan mengurus sebanyak RM634,916 diturunkan juga kepada Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Johor bagi perolehan aset bukan perubatan (ABR) untuk memenuhi keperluan mendesak di kedua-dua hospital itu," katanya dalam satu kenyataan.

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 6
RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION

REPORTS BY Nuradzimmah Daim and Mohamed Basyir

AT THE DEWAN RAKYAT

Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa says every word in the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Bill 2023 will be scrutinised so that everyone will have a better understanding of it. BERNAMA PIC

END OF SMOKING

GEG BILL TO BE REFERRED TO SELECT COMMITTEE

Undivided support from all parties needed, says Dr Zaliha

KUALA LUMPUR

THE bill for the proposed law touted as the generational endgame (GEG) for smoking in Malaysia will again be referred to the Parliamentary Special Select Committee (PSSC) for scrutiny.

This was after the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Bill 2023 was first read in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

In tabling the bill, Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa said it would be referred to the PSSC for Health before being debated in Parliament.

This is the second time the bill will be referred to the PSSC on Health. The first version of the bill, The Control of Tobacco Products and Smoking Bill 2022, was tabled in Parliament in July last year before being referred to the select committee.

"After taking into consideration the engagement session with the PSSC on Health on June 6, as well as with members of parliament, professionals and non-governmental organisations, there were requests that some matters be scrutinised further.

"This bill is crucial. Undivided support from all parties is needed. The ministry decided to refer the bill to the PSSC, where it would serve as a checks-and-balances mechanism that will take into account views of all parties," Dr Zaliha told the lower house.

During a special chambers session later, she said the ministry's move to once again refer the bill to the PSSC was made following calls by stakeholders, including individuals in the fraternity, to have it studied further.

"The committee will scrutinise each word in the bill, so that when the debate takes place later, everyone involved would have a better understanding of it.

"This will ensure that it can be approved in a swift manner," she said, urging all MPs to support the bill aimed to protect future generations against smoking.

She said the Health Ministry remained committed to ensuring the bill could be approved soon.

The bill deals with not only conventional smoking products, but also "next-generation" products, including electronic and combustible cigarette products.

It retains the GEG provision, affecting those born on Jan 1, 2007, onwards.

Under the proposed law, those found guilty of selling any tobacco product or service for smoking to individuals born on Jan 1, 2007, and beyond face a maximum fine of RM20,000 and one year's imprisonment, and a maximum RM30,000 fine and two years' jail for each subsequent offence.

Corporations found guilty of the same offence face a maximum penalty of RM100,000 and two years' jail for the first offence and a maximum fine of RM300,000 and three-year imprisonment for each subsequent offence.

Prohibition was also extended to the sale of tobacco substitute products and smoking devices to the same age group.

Under Sections 13(4) and 14(4), individuals born on Jan 1, 2007, onwards found guilty of buying any tobacco products, substitutes, or devices face a fine of up to RM500 and can be ordered to undergo community service according to the Criminal Procedure Code and Child Act 2001.

It was reported that the 2023 version of the bill incorporates amendments suggested by the PSSC last year, including a reduction in the maximum fine for GEG offenders from RM5,000 to RM500, and introduces a provision for community service.

It also incorporates the PSSC's recommendation for the removal of the offence of personal possession of tobacco or vape products by the GEG group.

This also removes the need for body search by law enforcement authorities.

The new bill will also limit the authorities' enforcement powers to manufacturing, packaging, storage, delivery, distribution or sale of tobacco products.

COVID-19 VACCINES

'Reveal actual cost of jabs procurement to PAC'

THE actual cost of securing the Covid-19 vaccines by Pharmaniaga Bhd must be revealed to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), said Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (PH-Kuala Selangor).

He said the PAC had constitutional powers and locus standi in Parliament, hence the details must be revealed to the committee.

This was despite the non-disclosure agreement related to the purchase of the vaccines.

"The Health Ministry's White Paper on Covid-19 Vaccine Procurement did not reveal the true cost, including how Pharmaniaga sold the vaccines at a high cost to six states. For these, I want the answers.

"I understand we must be obliged to the NDA, but to the PAC, I believe it should be revealed.

"The information should be supplied for it to make a complete, accurate and critical assessment," he said when debating the White Paper at the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Datuk Dr Radzi Jidin (PN-Putrajaya) refuted a claim by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim that the Health Ministry's Covid-19 vaccine procurement process was not referred to the Attorney-General's Chambers (A-GC).

He said the White Paper, tabled in the Dewan Rakyat by Deputy Health Minister Lukanisman Awang Sauni last week, proved that the prime minister was wrong in his claim.

"In the White Paper, it said the agreement signed had gone through a process of review and advice from the A-GC.

"Now who will apologise?

"The statement (by Anwar) gave the impression that the procurement was not referred to the A-G," he said when debating the White Paper yesterday.

On Feb 8, the prime minister, at a press conference, said the Health Ministry would table a White Paper on the procurement of Covid-19 vaccines and the related costs, which allegedly did not follow procedure and didn't obtain the A-G's sign off.

Former science, technology and innovation minister Khairy Jamaluddin, who was responsible for the procurement of the vaccines during the pandemic, rejected the accusation.

He said the acquisitions, made during the Perikatan Nasional administration, was presented to the cabinet with the knowledge of the A-GC.

'Govt proceeded with lop-sided contract to protect lives'

THE government decided to proceed with the procurement of the Covid-19 vaccines despite the lop-sided contract to protect the people, said Deputy Health Minister Lukanisman Awang Sauni.

He said this was done to stave off potentially fatal complications and ensure that the 80 per cent herd immunity rate was achieved as soon as possible.

"The government made its policy decision on the vaccine procurement to expedite the acquisition of the vaccines because each Malaysian life is precious," he said in winding up the debate on the White Paper on Covid-19 Vaccine Procurement in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Lukanisman said the Attorney-General's Chambers (A-GC) had also raised the issue of non-compliance in the agreement draft which had sided the company.

"Although the A-GC had advised that the agreement did not favour the government, the government needed to make a policy decision to continue the purchase based on public health and interests."

He said there were several challenges in securing enough Covid-19 vaccines, such as the market being dominated by the manufacturers.

"This enabled the manufacturer to dictate the terms in their favour.

"Following several rounds of discussions on the procurement, the manufacturers said the template for the contract was a global template used by all countries that dealt with them."

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NATION

Fuming over GEG Bill delay

Civil society groups say postponement puts more lives at risk

By FATIMAH ZAINAL
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PETALING JAYA: The move to refer the Bill on stubbing out smoking to the Parliamentary Special Select Committee (PSSC) again has been met with deep disappointment.

Calling the move surprising, many civil society groups said without a proper law in place, the legal loophole that allows minors to legally vape remains a real danger.

The Galen Centre for Health and Social Policy called upon the PSSC for Health – under Kuala Selangor MP Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad – to swiftly convene a meeting and send the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Bill 2023 back to the Dewan Rakyat for the second and third reading and a vote before the end of this Parliamentary meeting.

Its chief executive Azrul Mohd Khalib said the Health Minister's order in March to remove liquid and gel nicotine in the production of vape and ecigarettes from the list of controlled substances under the Poisons Act 1952 to enable taxation on these products had opened a Pandora's box.

"There is still no legal framework or regulation governing the production, packaging, marketing, sale and use of these devices," he said in a statement yesterday.

With the Bill delayed, there are now no safeguards to prevent the sale of ecigarettes and vape products to minors, he said.

He said unregulated status of vape and ecigarettes was a public health threat.

"No more excuses. The government must be pragmatic. If we have to temporarily shelve the Generational End Game (GEG) provisions to guarantee passage of this Bill, then so be it. We need the Bill to be passed in Parliament," he said.

Kick the habit: A no-smoking sign at a public park in Kuala Lumpur. — AZMAN GHANI/The Star

The GEG provision seek to regulate the sale, purchase and consumption of cigarettes and other smoking products for those born in 2007 and later.

The Bill, which was tabled last year by then Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, was also referred to the PSSC on Health in August 2022.

Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai said the decision to refer the Bill to PSSC for Health has raised doubts over the passing of the Bill in the current parliamentary session.

"In the best interest of public health, the Bill should proceed for debate and be voted on. Failure to do so will be seen as the government's lack of commitment to pass the Bill," he said.

He added that if the Bill must be delayed any further, the ministry must at least reverse its decision to exempt nicotine from the Poisons Act.

"We wish to highlight again that the removal of nicotine from the list of controlled substances under the Poisons Act allows any vape – both containing nicotine and non-nicotine – to be sold openly and legally to anyone including children of any age.

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) also said the decision was a "big disappointment".

"This is a very important Bill which will save hundreds of thousands of lives of the future generation.

"Hundreds of schoolchildren, students and youth, including young girls, are addicted to these nicotine habits," said its education and anti-smoking activist NV Subbarow.

He added that teachers also fear there would be more problems in schools without the new law.

He said many teachers had complained that boys and girls were bringing vape gadgets to schools daily.

WATCH THE VIDEO
TheStarTV.com

Anti-smoking Bill on hold again, referred to Health PSSC

KUALA LUMPUR: The anti-smoking law has been put off again.

The Bill, tabled for first reading in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday by Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa, has been referred to the Parliamentary Special Select Committee (PSSC) for Health for further fine-tuning.

The Bill, which was first tabled by then Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin last year, had also been sent to the PSSC then for fine-tuning due to resistance from several lawmakers. The revised Bill contains more than 20 recommendations made by the PSSC.

Dr Zaliha told the House yesterday that it was important to refer the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Bill 2023 to the PSSC to ensure adequate check-and-balance.

Dr Zaliha said that based on engagements with the PSSC, lawmakers, professionals and civil society groups, there have been requests for the provisions to be further refined.

"Therefore, the ministry has proposed that the Bill be referred to the PSSC," the Sekijang MP said, adding that her ministry remained committed to seeing the implementation of the GEG.

Meanwhile, a highly-placed ministry source told *The Star* that the Bill was already complete after it was reviewed by the PSSC last year and the committee's recommendations had been included in the fresh Bill.

The source said the Bill was improved to include steps on how the GEG provisions would be included.

There were two proposed steps on how the GEG will be implemented. GEG enforcement would first be implemented for conventional smoking. A review will then be conducted on the efficacy before enforcement on vaping was rolled out, the source said.

"It could take about three to five years," the source said, adding that there could also be a "misunderstanding" among MPs on the improvements made to the Bills.

The Bill – which includes the GEG provision – seeks to regulate the sale, purchase and consumption of cigarettes and other smoking products among those born in 2007 and later.

However, the aspects related to possession – which were in the previous anti-smoking Bill – have been dropped. The maximum fine remains at RM500 but no body searches will be conducted.

The enforcement in relation to the registration, advertising, packaging, sale and use of conventional tobacco products such as cigarettes, cigars, loose tobacco and rolled cigarettes would be immediately enforced on the GEG generation once the Bill is passed.

Meanwhile, any law enforcement on the GEG generation regarding the sale, purchase and use of products which use smoking devices – such as vapes, liquid nicotine and others – will come into force at a later date.

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13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : NATION

Seven clinics for male fertility issues set up

SEVEN clinics for men's health and well-being to help them deal with fertility problems have been set up by the Health Ministry, said Deputy Women, Family and Community Development Minister Raj Munni Sabu.

She said they are the Kuala Lumpur, Johor Baru and Penang subfertility clinics while the other four are known as Nur Sejahtera Clinics (KNS), with one of them located at Jalan Raja Laut in Kuala Lumpur.

The other three KNS are in Melaka, Dungun (Terengganu) and Sarawak.

"The setting up of these clinics is one of the three initiatives of the National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN) to overcome the problem of male infertility in the country," she said, adding that the subfertility clinics offer insemination procedure (IUI), in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) and intra cytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) services, Bernama reported.

Raj Munni said this during the question and answer session in response to a supplementary question from Manndzri Nasib (BN-Tenggara), who wanted to know the initiatives taken by the government to help men with fertility problems.

The government, she said, also held activities through advocacy programmes as well as provided tax exemptions for fertility treatment of up to RM6,000, and subsidy for civil servants.

Raj Munni said the government's objective of helping couples, especially those in the M40 and B40 groups, to deal with the problem of infertility through the LPPKN subfertility service had been achieved.

"The response to the service, introduced in 1979, had been good with 40,576 new cases and 262,657 repeat cases recorded as of last April," she added.

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UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 9
RUANGAN : NATION

AT THE DEWAN RAKYAT

Vaccine procurement was a matter of 'life and death'

THE emergency procurement of the Covid-19 vaccines was made despite the agreement being seen as favouring suppliers because it was a matter of "life and death" during the pandemic, says Deputy Health Minister Lukanisman Awang Sauni.

He said countries entering agreements with the vaccine makers including Pfizer had to sign a confidential disclosure agreement (CDA) and a binding term sheet (BTS) before the manufacturing and supply agreement (MSA) was inked. This allowed the supplier to come up with confidential terms.

"If the government had not signed those documents, early negotiations and information such as the content of active ingredients and initial findings of clinical trials would not have been made known to the government," he said.

Lukanisman added that changes to procurement procedures had to be taken in line with the emergency situation at that time.

"The Covid-19 procurement was literally a life and death issue," he said to a question by Hassan Abdul Karim (PH-Pasir Gudang) while winding up the debate on the White Paper on Covid-19 Vaccine Procurement Management in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Hassan had asked why the contract was signed when it was found to have contained terms that were more in favour of the supplier.

Lukanisman said the Attorney General's Chambers had flagged the irregularities in the draft agreement which was seen as being more in favour of the company.

The decision by the government to continue with the vaccine procurement was to prevent the rise of Covid-19 infections and achieve the 80% herd immunity, he added.

Addressing the claims of a delay in procuring the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine compared with Singapore, Lukanisman said Malaysia was the second country in Asean to receive the mRNA vaccine after the island-republic.

He said a thorough analysis on procurement and the implementation of the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme (PICK) had to be conducted since Malaysia's population was six times that of Singapore.

Lukanisman also said the government had agreed to change the remaining order of 2.7 million vaccines doses for children issued by Pfizer BioNTech to a new generation of vaccines or bivalents targeted for the vulnerable groups without any financial implication.

The bivalent vaccines provide protection against the original SARS-CoV-2 virus and the Omicron subvariants such as BA.4 and BA.5, which were previously said to be vaccine-resistant.

Conflicting details, irregularities on vaccine purchase, says MP

AN Opposition MP has zeroed in on a detail in the Health Ministry's White Paper on Covid-19 Vaccine Procurement Management which he says contradicts a previous claim made by the Prime Minister.

Datuk Dr Radzi Jidin (PN-Putrajaya) said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had in February claimed the Covid-19 vaccine procurement was signed off without the Attorney General Chambers' (AGC) approval, but it was disproved in the White Paper presented by Deputy Health Minister Lukanisman Awang Sauni in the Dewan Rakyat last week.

"When we looked at the motion read out by the deputy minister, he said the 'Dewan is aware of the signed agreement that has gone through a review process by the AGC.

"So, who should apologise? The PM's statement gave the impression that the vaccine procurement was not brought to the AGC but the deputy minister said otherwise," Radzi said when debating the White Paper on Covid-19 Vaccine Procurement yesterday.

In February, Anwar said ministers from the previous administration had signed off on the procurement without the approval of the AGC, citing it as among the irregularities found in the purchase of vaccines by the White Paper.

Former health minister Khairy Jamaluddin dismissed Anwar's claim, saying all purchases made by the government during the then Perikatan Nasional administration were made known to the Cabinet.

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 17
RUANGAN : VIEWS

Extend PSD scholarship application deadline

IN response to the statements made by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa regarding the decision to resume the provision of Public Service Department (PSD) scholarships for medical-related programmes, Malaysian Medics International (MMI) wishes to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Health Ministry and PSD (or Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam, JPA) for taking the concerns of the rakyat into consideration ("PM: JPA scholarships to continue", *The Star*, June 12; online at bit.ly/star_jpa).

We applaud the government's decision to prioritise the education of future professionals for the healthcare industry, an essential aspect of our society. The investment in the education of healthcare professionals is crucial for the well-being of our nation and it will yield significant benefits for Malaysia in the long run. Thus, we humbly call upon the Health Ministry and the PSD to consider the following:

> **Review existing research on health human resources:** The reason provided for the initial decision to discontinue PSD scholarships for medical-related programmes was the projections of an oversupply of medical officers from 2026 to 2030, as stipulated in the "Supply and Needs-Based Requirement Projections of Malaysia Human Resources for Health Using a System Dynamics Approach 2016-2030" study published in 2019.

Photo: AFP

However, the intention to reallocate resources to other sectors would have come at the cost of the healthcare system, which has undergone significant transformation since the Covid-19 pandemic began in 2020. The initial decision failed to acknowledge the nationwide reduction in the number of healthcare professionals in both major and district hospitals and public health clinics in recent years.

Therefore, the commitment of the government in safeguarding the sustainability of the healthcare system by taking steps to support students keen on pursuing medical-related programmes is well-received.

With the best interests of the Malaysian healthcare system and its vital components – the healthcare professionals – in mind, MMI stands in full support of this latest decision and calls upon the Health Ministry to conduct a thorough and comprehensive review of existing research on health human resources.

> **Provide a compensatory solution for PSD scholarship applicants:** MMI calls upon the PSD to consider a compensatory solution following the initial decision of discontinuing the scholarships that potentially dissuaded interested applicants.

Despite revoking the decision, there have been no indications of allowing interested applicants to apply for these scholarships as the application deadline has remained April 2, 2023.

Due to high costs and financial constraints, for many students, securing a scholarship would be the only way to pursue their dream of a medical career.

Consequently, we implore the relevant authorities to reconsider their stance and enable eligible individuals to reapply for scholarships this year or establish alternative ways in which they can apply for relevant scholarships.

MMI appreciates the government's prompt response in addressing the issues caused by the initial suspension of the PSD scholarships.

Such measures have undoubtedly instilled a sense of reassurance and confidence in the nation as it reflects the government's commitment and dedication to maintaining a quality healthcare system for the future.

MALAYSIAN MEDICS INTERNATIONAL (MMI)
Term: 2022/2023

MMI is an international medical student-led organisation advocating for inclusivity and diversity, reform in medical education, and the welfare of junior doctors and medical students.

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

13 JUN 2023

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

Dengue fever cases up by 158%

» Cumulative number recorded at 48,712 compared with 18,883 during same period last year, says Health DG

KUALA LUMPUR: The cumulative number of dengue fever cases from January to June 3 increased by 158%, with 48,712 cases reported compared with 18,883 for the same period last year.

Health Director-General Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan said during the same period, a total of 34 deaths were recorded compared with 12 reported in 2022.

He said in the 22nd Epidemiological Week (ME22) from May 28 to June 3, the number of cases was 2,455 compared with 2,638 in the previous week.

"Three deaths due to complications were reported in ME22," he added.

On the number of hotspots during ME22, he said there was an increase, with 82 locations detected compared with 72 the previous week, Bernama reported.

"A total of 62 locations were in Selangor, nine in Penang, five each in Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya, four in Sabah and one each in Kedah and Perak," he said.

On chikungunya surveillance, Muhammad Radzi said one case was recorded in Selangor in ME22, bringing the cumulative number of chikungunya cases to 135.

"On Zika surveillance, a total of 1,163 blood samples and 57 urine samples were screened and the results were all negative," he said.

Muhammad Radzi added that analysis of deaths due to dengue complications from 2020 to 2022 showed that the majority of patients were suffering from chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, at 27%, diabetes at 23%, obesity at 23%, hyperlipidemia at 8%, heart disease at 7% and kidney disease at 6%.

He also said early symptoms of dengue fever such as high fever accompanied by pain behind the eyes, headache, joint or muscle pain and dizziness should not be taken lightly, especially for those suffering from chronic diseases.

He also advised the public to ensure that there are no potential breeding grounds for mosquitoes inside and around residential compounds.

More talent needed to boost digital status: Minister

LONDON: Malaysia is on its way to a golden digital decade and becoming an "Asian digital tiger" and more talent and expertise will be needed in data and technology, said Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil.

Speaking to about 100 students, he emphasised that the future is going to be all about digital technology and that at least a quarter of the economy will be contributed by the digital economy.

"The digital economy is a big part of our future. We are getting a lot of big investments almost every month. Just a few days ago, a company from Australia invested RM3 billion for a data centre in Petaling Jaya, Selangor. The week before, a US company also committed RM3 billion.

"Whatever field of work you are in, there will be a digital aspect to that work. In this day and age, what we considered conventional jobs is no longer the case. A lot of traditional jobs are disappearing. The future is very exciting but also very challenging," he said.

Malaysia is aiming to achieve a digital investment target of RM130 billion by 2025, which would contribute 25.5% to gross domestic product.

During the event, Fahmi also advised the students to eventually return home and serve the country.

"After studies, many of you would have to choose either to stay or return. If you stay, make full use of the opportunity. Study hard and one day, bring that talent and experience back to Malaysia. Come back and help Malaysia," he said.

Fahmi posing with Malaysian students at a gathering in London yesterday. –*BERNAMAPIC*

There are currently about 12,500 Malaysian students in the UK.

Fahmi is currently in London leading the Malaysian delegation to London Technology Week, which was opened by UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan yesterday.

Taking place at the Queen Elizabeth II Centre in London, about 30,000 delegates are expected to be in attendance throughout the week.

Fahmi is also scheduled to witness the signing of more than 10 memoranda of understanding between Malaysian and international companies. – Bernama

Move to reduce high blood pressure cases

KUALA LUMPUR: The Health Ministry aims to reduce cases of high blood pressure in the country by 25% before 2025.

Its minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa said during the period, the ministry also targets to reduce salt consumption by 30%, in addition to preventing an increase in the obesity rate by ensuring that it remains below the 15% level.

"As for diabetes, we found that 31.89% of diabetic patients have reached a good level of colon diabetes, which is a HbA1c reading of less than 6.5%.

"For diabetes, we also monitor it through blood glucose level measurements every three months for patients treated at health clinics, and this monitoring is done through the National Diabetes Registry," she said.

She was replying during the question-and-answer session at the Dewan Rakyat yesterday to a supplementary question from Datuk Muhammad Bakhtiar Wan Chik (PH-Balik Pulau).

Muhammad Bakhtiar had asked about the ministry's efforts to reduce the number of people suffering from diabetes and high blood pressure. – Bernama

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Voice disorders could cause stress, mental issues

KUALA LUMPUR: Our vocal cords are probably among the biggest gifts endowed by nature. Imagine what our lives would be like if we were to suddenly develop a voice disorder and lose our ability to speak.

For people in certain fields such as teaching or show business, their voice plays a critical role in keeping their careers going.

Sharing her experience, local singer and music lecturer Datuk Syafinaz Selamat said she once lost her voice, an experience that affected her career.

"It happened last year. I suffered a viral infection that affected the nerves of my vocal cords, causing me to lose control of my voice and my ability to sing.

"I then decided to take a break from singing and focus on my treatment. I saw a laryngologist and took my medications and also underwent voice therapy online with a vocal teacher from Germany."

The former National Arts, Cultural and Heritage Academy board of directors member said her voice is now on the road to recovery, and reminded the public to always take care of their voice and physical health, Bernama reported.

> Studies conducted overseas revealed those suffering from afflictions affecting their ability to speak feel worse than chronic disease patients, says laryngology expert

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Faculty of Medicine professor of laryngology Prof Datin Dr Marina Mat Baki said studies done overseas found that people with voice issues felt worse about their lives than those suffering from chronic diseases.

"Voice problems can also lead to mental issues and stress because it can prevent one from getting a job or participating in their favourite social activities."

Marina, who is also a senior consultant of otorhinolaryngology at Hospital Canselor Tuanku Muhriz, said those who are prone to developing a "vocal overdoer syndrome" are mainly professionals who tend to overuse their voice, especially singers, news readers, teachers and even politicians and businessmen.

Excessive use of one's voice can strain and damage one's vocal cords, the folds of tissue located in the larynx (voice box) that produce the sounds used for speech.

"Repeated and prolonged damage can irritate the vocal cords and cause swelling, affecting the quality of the voice, which will turn hoarse.

"Following this, polyps, nodules, cysts and scars can occur, which will further deteriorate the quality of the voice."

For some professionals, the situation worsens when the demands of their careers force them to continue using their voice even though it is not in good condition.

"There have been cases of singers who were forced to readapt their songs as a result of voice issues, which will have a profound effect on their careers," she said, adding that professional voice users make up about 30% of patients that are referred to speech therapists after undergoing a voice box endoscopy (laryngoscopy).

She said this sizeable number is likely due to a lack of knowledge about voice production and the factors that cause damage to the vocal cords.

Marina also pointed out that lifestyle habits such as eating unhealthy foods, smoking, drinking excessive amounts of alcohol, irregular sleeping patterns and not drinking enough water can also impact one's vocal cords as such practices can cause the stomach to produce more acid, which in turn can trigger an acid reflux reaction, with the stomach acid going all the way up to the vocal cords.

"Reflux can cause secretions and discomfort in the throat as a result of which the person concerned will cough and clear their throat frequently. But, this will only worsen their voice health."