

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

# SOP COVID-19 sedia ada diterus

**KKM sedang bincang langkah perlindungan, diumumkan dalam masa terdekat**

**Segamat:** Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) memutuskan prosedur operasi standard (SOP) sedia ada berkaitan COVID-19 akan diteruskan seperti biasa walau-

pun Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) memutuskan wabak itu bukan lagi dikategori sebagai kecemasan kesihatan antarabangsa.

Bagaimanapun, Menteri Kesihatan, Dr Zaliha Mustafa, berkata pihaknya sedang membincangkan langkah perlindungan terkini yang akan dilaksanakan kepada rakyat dan perkara itu akan diumumkan dalam masa terdekat.

"Buat sementara ini, KKM akan meneruskan langkah perlindungan kawalan atau SOP sedia ada sehingga kita membuat keputusan muktamad sama ada

untuk mengikut saranan WHO atau sebaliknya.

"Perbincangan pada peringkat tertinggi KKM juga sedang dilakukan bagi mempertimbangkan perkara itu," katanya selepas Majlis Sambutan Hari Raya Aidilfitri Parlimen Sekijang 2023 di Dewan Masjid Bandar IOI di sini, semalam.

## Perlu putus sendiri

Ketua Pengarah WHO, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, dalam laporan media semalam berkata, COVID-19 tidak lagi dikategorikan sebagai kecemasan

kesihatan global dan keputusan itu dibuat pada pertemuan Jawatankuasa Kecemasan kali ke-15.

Isa sekali gus menjadi langkah besar menuju pengakhiran wabak pandemik yang sudah membunuh lebih 6.9 juta orang, selain mengancam ekonomi dan komuniti sejagat.

Bagaimanapun, pengumuman itu tidak mempunyai kesan konkrit susulan setiap negara perlu memutuskan sendiri langkah perlindungan yang akan dikenakan.

Dr Zaliha yang juga Ahli Parlimen Sekijang berkata, me-

skipun jumlah kes COVID-19 yang dilaporkan baru-baru ini meningkat, ia masih terkawal dan tidak membebaskan perkhidmatan kesihatan dengan majoriti pesakit dimasukkan ke hospital adalah golongan berisiko tinggi seperti individu dengan komorbid dan warga emas.

Justeru, beliau menasihatkan orang ramai untuk terus mengamalkan SOP dan keselamatan sendiri, termasuk memakai pelitup muka jika perlu, terutama bagi mereka yang bergejala, selain terus menjaga kebersihan diri. **BERNAMA**

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN  
MUKA SURAT : 19  
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Kes maut makan ikan buntal

# Waris kesal peniaga masih bebas jual ikan beracun di FB

Anak dakwa  
siasatan  
kematian ibu,  
ayah temui  
jalan buntu

Oleh Mohamad Fahd Rahmat  
bhnews@bh.com.my

**Kluang:** Keluarga pasangan warga emas yang maut akibat makan hidangan ikan buntal pada akhir Mac dan awal April lalu, kesal kerana penjual ikan beracun itu masih bebas berniaga tanpa dikenakan tindakan undang-undang.

Anak mangsa, Ng Ai Lee, 51, turut mempersoalkan ketidakadilan yang berlaku memandangkan ahli keluarga masih

meratap, selain menanggung kesakitan tidak berkesudahan akibat kehilangan, ibunya, Lim Siew Guan, 83 dan bapa, Eng Kuai Sin@ Ng Chuan Sing, 84.

Ai Lee berkata, usaha pihaknya bertanyakan perkembangan siasatan kepada pihak berkuasa juga menemui jalan buntu kerana panggilan telefon dan mesej tidak dibalas.

"Nyawa berharga ibu bapa saya diambil begitu sahaja, saya melaporkan penjual FB (penjual ikan) kepada Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah Kluang dan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) tetapi tiada tindakan diambil, mereka masih menjual di 'page' (laman Facebook) mereka.

"(Apakah ini bermakna) lebih banyak nyawa perlu dikorbankan? Adakah lebih banyak keluarga perlu menanggung kesakitan tidak berkesudahan seperti kami?"

"Di mana keadilan, apa yang penting, hidup itu berharga, sila



Ai Lee membuat laporan mengenai penjual ikan buntal di FB di Balai Polis Paloh, Kluang, 15 April lalu.

(Foto Mohamad Fahd Rahmat/BH)

lakukan sesuatu," katanya ketika dihubungi.

## Lanskat akta

Ai Lee mendakwa penjual berkenaan melanggar Akta Lembaga Kemajuan Ikan Malaysia (LKIM) Peraturan Pemasaran Seksyen 23(1) yang memperun-

tukkan larangan berurus niaga, memproses, mengeksport atau mengimport ikan tidak selamat dimakan oleh manusia tanpa kebenaran bertulis daripada LKIM.

"Namun hingga hari ini, penjual berkenaan masih bebas

berniaga di Facebook dan saya sendiri sudah membuat laporan polis mengenai hal ini pada 15 April lalu," katanya.

Dalam pada itu, Pengerusi Jawatankuasa Kesihatan dan Perpaduan Negeri Johor, Ling Tian Soon, berkata kertas siasatan mengenai kes berkenaan sudah diserahkan kepada pejabat Timbalan Pendakwa Raya untuk tindakan lanjut.

"Sebarang keputusan bergantung pihak Pendakwa Raya sama ada nak tuduh ataupun tidak melalui undang-undang yang sesuai," katanya.

Dalam kejadian sebelum ini, Kuai Sin meninggal dunia selepas 15 hari dirawat di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU) Hospital Enche' Besar Hajjah Kalsom (HEBHK), di sini, 8 April lalu.

Terdahulu, isterinya, Siew Guan meninggal dunia selepas beberapa jam dirawat di hospital sama pada 25 Mac lalu.

AKHBAR : KOSMO  
MUKA SURAT : 6  
RUANGAN : NEGARA



SEMUA Tabika dan Taska Kemas melaksanakan langkah pencegahan dalam menghadapi cuaca panas serta jerebu. - GAMBAR HIASAN

## Tabika, Taska Kemas laksana pencegahan

**PETALING JAYA** - Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (Kemas) mengingatkan semua Taman Bimbingan Kanak-Kanak (Tabika) dan Taman Asuhan Kanak-Kanak (Taska) agar melaksanakan langkah-langkah pencegahan dalam menghadapi cuaca panas dan jerebu.

Unit Komunikasi Korporat Kemas, Kementerian Kemajuan Desa dan Wilayah (KKDW), menerusi kenyataan berkata, ia sebagai respons kepada saranan Kementerian Pendidikan (KPM) dan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM), sebelum ini.

"Antaranya ialah penangguhan semua aktiviti luar bilik darjah jika cuaca terlalu panas, hadkan aktiviti fizikal lasak semasa dan tempoh berada di luar bangunan.

"Selain itu, mereka disaran untuk guna pelindung diri seperti payung, topi dan kipas atau penyaman udara untuk sejukkan badan selain galakkan

kanak-kanak minum cukup air.

"Bagi kawasan yang bacaan indeks pencemaran udara (IPU) melebihi 100, semua aktiviti luar bilik darjah perlu dihentikan dan digesa dapatkan rawatan segera jika alami gejala strok haba," katanya dalam kenyataan tersebut.

Menurut kenyataan itu, semua Tabika dan Taska Kemas turut dinasihatkan agar sentiasa mematuhi Garis Panduan Aktiviti Fizikal Malaysia, KKM serta peka dengan perkembangan semasa.

"Maklumat terkini status cuaca panas juga boleh didapati di laman sesawang Jabatan Meteorologi (MetMalaysia) di <https://www.met.gov.my/tklm/status-cuaca-panas>.

"Kenali langkah-langkah pencegahan ketika cuaca panas di laman sesawang KKM dan jangan lupa ikuti juga perkembangan semasa menerusi media," tambahnya.

AKHBAR : KOSMO  
MUKA SURAT : 7  
RUANGAN : NEGARA



ORANG ramai digalakkan memakai pelitup muka di tempat awam bagi mengekang penularan wabak Covid-19.  
- GAMBAR HIASAN

KKM perinci langkah pencegahan terkini

## SOP Covid-19 di Malaysia kekal – Zaliha

Oleh FARAHWAHIDA AHMAD

**SEGAMAT** – Prosedur Operasi Standard (SOP) Covid-19 di negara ini masih kekal walaupun Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) mengumumkan wabak berkenaan bukan lagi kecemasan kesihatan global, Jumaat lalu.

Menteri Kesihatan, Dr. Zaliha Mustafa berkata, perbincangan dan pemantauan secara berterusan sedang dilakukan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) sebelum sebarang keputusan dicapai.

Menurutnya, perkara itu akan diumumkan dalam masa terdekat, bagaimanapun SOP sedia ada berkaitan wabak itu akan diteruskan seperti biasa.

“Buat sementara ini KKM akan meneruskan langkah perlindungan kawalan atau SOP sedia ada sehinggalah kita membuat keputusan muktamad sama ada untuk mengikut saranan WHO atau sebaliknya.”

“Perbincangan di peringkat tertinggi KKM juga sedang dilakukan bagi mempertimbangkan perkara tersebut.

“Keadaan jangkitan Covid-19 di seluruh negara masih terkawal dan perkhidmatan kesihatan



Buat sementara ini KKM akan meneruskan langkah perlindungan kawalan atau SOP sedia ada sehinggalah kita membuat keputusan muktamad sama ada untuk mengikut saranan WHO atau sebaliknya.”

**ZALIHA**

serta kapasiti di hospital tidak terjejas meskipun terdapat peningkatan kes,” katanya.

Beliau yang juga Ahli Parlimen Sekijang berkata demikian pada sidang media ketika menghadiri Sambutan Rumah Terbuka Aidilfitri di Dewan Masjid Bandar IOI, Segamat di sini semalam.

Zaliha berkata, pihaknya sangat menggalakkan pemakaian penutup muka di lokasi terbuka dan bagi mereka yang bergejala.

“Kalau kita bekerjasama dan bertanggung jawab dengan menjalankan kawalan sendiri ia akan dapat membendung penularan,” tambahnya.

WHO sebelum ini pernah mengisytiharkan Covid-19 sebagai darurat kecemasan awam pada Januari 2020 lalu kira-kira enam minggu selepas virus tersebut melanda dunia.

Status itu membolehkan masyarakat antarabangsa memberi tumpuan kepada ancaman kesihatan itu, di samping meningkatkan kerjasama bagi menghasilkan vaksin dan rawatan.

Jumaat lalu, Covid-19 tidak lagi dikategorikan sebagai kecemasan kesihatan global seperti mana diumumkan WHO.

Ia sekali gus menjadi langkah besar menuju pengakhiran wabak pandemik yang sudah membunuh lebih 6.9 juta orang, selain mengancam ekonomi dan komuniti sejagat.

Ketua Pengarah WHO, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, berkata syor itu diputuskan dalam pertemuan Jawatankuasa Kecemasan kali ke-15.

Jelasnya, pertemuan Jawatankuasa Kecemasan untuk kali ke-15 kelmarin mengesyorkan kepadanya untuk mengisytiharkan penamatan kecemasan kesihatan awam bagi kebimbangan antarabangsa.

AKHBAR : KOSMO  
MUKA SURAT : 10  
RUANGAN : NEGARA

## Kemas, JKN P. Pinang jalin program perubatan postnatal

**SEBERANG PERAI** – Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (Kemas) Pulau Pinang dan Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri (JKN) Pulau Pinang menjalin kolaborasi strategik menerusi Program Penjagaan dan Perubatan Tradisional Postnatal mulai tahun ini.

Ketua Pengarahnya, Ahmad Kamal Idris Mohd. Nawawi berkata, kerjasama tersebut menjadikan Kemas Pulau Pinang sebagai agensi kerajaan pertama di Malaysia yang mendapat pengiktirafan daripada Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) untuk diberikan tauliah bagi menjalankan perubatan tradisional dan komplementari.

“JKN Pulau Pinang akan memberi khidmat nasihat kepada peserta dalam proses mendapatkan Perakuan Pengamal Berdaftar dengan Majlis Perubatan Tradisional dan Komplementari (PT&K) seterusnya memasukkan mereka ke dalam Program Perkhidmatan Penjagaan Tradisional Postnatal di Klinik Kesihatan Negeri Pulau Pinang.

“Dengan adanya pentauliahkan ini usahawan bimbingan Kemas terlindung di bawah Akta Perubatan Tradisional dan Komplementari tahun 2016,” katanya.

Terdahulu beliau merasmikan Program Wacana Ilmu-Wanita Inspirasiku (WINS) Kemas pering-

kat Negeri Pulau Pinang.

Ahmad Kamal memberitahu, program tersebut akan dimanfaatkan seramai 62 peserta yang akan mendapat sijil tauliah bagi mengendalikan aktiviti perubatan tradisional seperti urutan selepas bersalin atau postnatal dari KKM.

“Peserta bagi program ini iaitu di bawah Pusat Keterampilan Diri Kemas bukan sahaja mendapat kemahiran perbidanan Melayu terapi moden (postnatal) malah berpeluang menjadikan kemahiran ini sebagai sumber pendapatan dan menaikkan taraf hidup yang lebih baik bagi masyarakat luar bandar,” katanya.



AHMAD KAMAL (dua dari kanan) ketika Program WINS Kemas di Bukit Mertajam semalam.

+

AKHBAR : SINAR AHAD  
MUKA SURAT : 5  
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

## Tabika, taska Kemas perlu tangguh aktiviti luar bilik darjah jika cuaca terlalu panas

**KUALA LUMPUR** - Semua Taman Bimbingan Kanak-Kanak (tabika) dan Taman Asuhan Kanak-Kanak (taska) Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (Kemas) perlu menangguhkan semua aktiviti luar bilik darjah sekiranya cuaca terlalu panas.

Kemas dalam kenyataannya, memaklumkan kesemua tadika dan taska juga perlu memantau aktiviti yang boleh mendedahkan kanak-kanak kepada keadaan cuaca panas bagi memastikan kesihatan mereka tidak terjejas, selain menengahkan aktiviti fizikal lasak semasa cuaca panas kerana ia boleh meningkatkan risiko penyakit akibat cuaca panas.

Tadika dan taska juga perlu memastikan bekalan air bersih mencukupi dan menggalakkan kanak-kanak membawa air

minuman sendiri serta menggalakkan kanak-kanak mengambil air minuman dalam kuantiti yang sesuai bagi mengawal suhu badan.

"Semua tabika dan taska Kemas dinasihatkan agar sentiasa mengikut garis panduan aktiviti fizikal, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) serta perlu peka dengan perkembangan semasa melalui media mengenai fenomena berjerembu di kawasan atau daerah masing-masing.

"Maklumat terkini status cuaca panas juga boleh didapati di laman sesawang Jabatan Meteorologi Malaysia (MetMalaysia) dan langkah-langkah pencegahan bagi mengurangkan kesan kesihatan akibat cuaca panas di laman sesawang KKM," menurut kenyataan itu. - *Bernama*

AKHBAR : SINAR AHAD  
MUKA SURAT : 14  
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

## KKM bincang langkah perlindungan Covid-19 terkini

**SEGAMAT** - Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) sedang membincangkan langkah perlindungan terkini yang akan dilaksanakan kepada rakyat susulan Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) memuluskan Covid-19 bukan lagi dikategorikan sebagai kecemasan kesihatan antarabangsa.

Menteri Kesihatan, Dr Zaliha Mustafa berkata, perkara tersebut akan diumumkan dalam masa terdekat, bagaimanapun prosedur operasi standard (SOP) sedia ada berkaitan wabak itu akan diteruskan seperti biasa.

"Buat sementara ini KKM akan meneruskan langkah perlindungan kawalan atau SOP sedia ada sehinggalah kita membuat keputusan muktamad sama ada untuk mengikut

saranan WHO atau sebaliknya.

"Perbincangan di peringkat tertinggi KKM juga sedang dilakukan bagi memperimbangkan perkara tersebut," katanya kepada pemberita selepas Majlis Sambutan Hari Raya Aidilfitri Parlimen Sekijang 2023 di Dewan Masjid Bandar IOI, di sini pada Sabtu.

Beliau menjelaskan, meskipun jumlah kes Covid-19 yang dilaporkan baru-baru ini meningkat, ia masih terkawal dan tidak membebankan perkhidmatan kesihatan.

Menurutnya, majoriti pesakit dimasukkan ke hospital adalah golongan berisiko tinggi seperti in-



DR ZALIHA

dividu dengan komorbid dan warga emas.

Justeru, Dr Zaliha menasihatkan orang ramai untuk terus mengamalkan SOP dan keselamatan sendiri termasuk memakai pelitup muka jika perlu terutamanya bagi mereka yang bergejala, selain terus menjaga kebersihan diri.

Sebelum ini, *agensi berita Jerman* dpa melaporkan WHO pada Jumaat memuluskan pandemik Covid-19 global tidak lagi dikategorikan sebagai kecemasan kesihatan antarabangsa selepas dunia dilanda pandemik sejak tiga tahun lalu. - *Bernama*

AKHBAR : SINAR AHAD  
MUKA SURAT : 28  
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

## Pembedahan pertama ECIRS di Pantai Timur



Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan ialah hospital pertama di Pantai Timur berjaya lakukan ECIRS.

**KUANTAN** - Jabatan Urologi Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan (HTAA) menjadi hospital pertama di Pantai Timur yang berjaya menjalankan pembedahan gabungan *endoskopik intrarenal* (ECIRS) pada 3 Mei lalu.

Pengarah Kesihatan Negeri, Datuk Dr Nor Azimi Yunus berkata, empat pesakit yang menghidap penyakit batu karang di buah pinggang dan ureter itu berjaya menjalani pembedahan tersebut.

"Mereka ialah dua pesakit wanita dan dua lagi lelaki berusia 35 hingga 71 tahun.

"Melalui kaedah tersebut, dua pakar urologi boleh melakukan dua prosedur berbeza pada masa sama ke atas pesakit iaitu *nefrolitotomi perkutaneus* (PCNL) dan *ureteroskopi* (URS) menjadikan masa pembedahan lebih pendek," katanya dalam satu kenyataan pada Jumaat.

*Nefrolitotomi perkutaneus*

ialah prosedur invasif minimum untuk membuang batu dari buah pinggang melalui tusukan kecil di kulit. Kaedah itu sesuai untuk membuang batu bersaiz lebih daripada dua sentimeter (sm) dan yang terdapat berhampiran kawasan pelvis.

Ujarnya, pakar perunding urologi dari Hospital Selayang, Dr Toh Charng Chee diundang bagi membantu melancarkan pembedahan tersebut.

Pembedahan tersebut dijalankan oleh Dr Hamid Ghazali dan Dr Syahril Anuar. Kedua-dua mereka ialah pakar perunding urologi dan pakar urologi di HTAA.

"ECIRS ialah rawatan yang selamat dan berkesan untuk pesakit batu karang yang kompleks.

"Ia mempunyai pelbagai kelebihan berbanding kaedah konvensional termasuk kadar jangkitan kuman yang lebih rendah," katanya.



AKHBAR : NEW SUNDAY TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 1

RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN



AKHBAR : NEW SUNDAY TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION

FIGHT NOT OVER

# 'WE MUST LEARN TO LIVE WITH COVID'

Pandemic is over, but vital to prepare for future global health emergencies, says expert

NURADZIMMAH DAIM  
KUALA LUMPUR  
news@nst.com.my

**T**HE fight against Covid-19 and its variants is far from over for Malaysia despite the World Health Organisation's (WHO) decision to end the coronavirus global health emergency.

Experts said Covid-19 variants would continue to appear and it was important that Malaysians prepare for future global health emergencies.

"They highlighted Malaysians' less than desirable attitudes towards vaccinations, which were clear with the poor take-up of booster shots.

Universiti Malaya virologist and research consultant Emeritus Professor Datuk Dr Lam Sai Kit said the virus would be with us for a long time, like dengue and influenza, and people must learn to live with it.

"Variants will arise from time to time, but we now have better knowledge and tools to handle future outbreaks.

"As we continue to battle Covid-19, we must prepare for the next one. For now, let us rejoice that the pandemic is behind us," said the senior fellow at Academy of Sciences Malaysia, who also headed the medical team that discovered the Nipah virus.

Lam, who is part of an international task force looking into the origins of Covid-19, said it was time for life to return to normal after three years of the pandemic and as severe cases decreased in the past year.

"Malaysia had independently adopted a stand that the Covid-19 pandemic transitioned to the endemic phase as early as mid-2022, almost a year before the WHO declaration.

"What is important now is to review how the world handled the pandemic and the many lessons learnt that can help us face the next pandemic."

He said Covid-19 had caused huge economic damage and led to changes in people's lifestyles,



People waiting to cross a street in Kuala Lumpur. The World Health Organisation has ended Covid-19's status as a public health emergency of international concern. PIC BY ASWADI ALIAS

with online learning, video conferences and working from home becoming more accepted.

"The pandemic has shown us how small the world is and that whatever happens in one country can affect other parts of the world within days and weeks.

"This was true for previous epidemics like severe acute respiratory syndrome-related coronavirus, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, avian influenza and Nipah, to name a few.

"We need to have better global coordination, equity and solidarity and make intelligent use of existing tools and technologies to combat new virus outbreaks."

After several months of curating scientific literature and interviewing prominent scientists, Lam said the independent task force found that there was hardly any evidence to show that the pandemic started from experiments in a lab, whether in China or elsewhere.

There was plenty of science-based evidence that suggested that the pandemic was the result of the virus jumping from wild animals to humans, he said.

Based on this, Lam and the task force, comprising 14 members, published a paper in the prestigious peer-reviewed journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* with recommendations on how to be prepared for the next pandemic based on the One Health approach.

"The lab leak hypothesis is speculative, with no solid scientific evidence to date, and may distract us from making such preparations."

Public health expert Professor Dr Jamal Hisham Hashim said Malaysians should still have ad-

equate protection against severe Covid-19 infection, hospitalisation and death due to herd immunity.

"I don't think our healthcare system will be overwhelmed like before, (even) if we get another wave of infection.

"As immunity against Covid-19 is not lifelong and as immunity from vaccination and reinfection wanes, people will get reinfected again unless they get boosters."

Malaysia's Covid-19 vaccination take-up rate was initially high, with 84.3 per cent of the population, or 27,532,071 people, completing primary vaccination.

But the take-up rate fell for the first and second Covid-19 vaccine booster doses.

Up to December last year, only 49.8 per cent of the population, or 16,279,553 people, had received the first booster dose and only 1.9 per cent of the population, or 633,319 people, had received the second booster dose.

On Friday, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the United Nations organisation was ending Covid-19's status as a public health emergency of international concern, the highest level of alert.

He said countries should now manage the virus, which killed more than 6.9 million people, along with other infectious diseases.

In Malaysia, 37,020 have died of Covid-19.

According to WHO data, Covid-19 deaths peaked at more than 100,000 fatalities a week in January 2021 to just over 3,500 in the week up to April 24, reflecting widespread vaccination, better treatments and population immunity from prior infections.

AKHBAR : NEW SUNDAY TIMES  
MUKA SURAT : 3  
RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION

CORONAVIRUS S.G.P.

# NEW COVID MEASURES ON THE CARDS

Health Ministry's highest level discussing matter, will be announced soon, says minister

SEGAMAT

**T**HE Health Ministry is discussing new Covid-19 protective measures now that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared that the coronavirus is no longer a global public health emergency.

Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa said the new Covid-19 measures would be announced soon, adding that the ministry would not rush into a decision without the findings from monitoring the Covid-19 situation nationwide.

"For now, the ministry will continue with existing Covid-19 measures and standard operating procedures until we decide whether to follow WHO's recommendations.

"The ministry's highest level is discussing the matter," she said at the Sekijang parliamentary constituency's Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house at the Masjid



Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa (right) visiting a 'lemang' booth at the Sekijang parliamentary constituency's Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house in Segamat yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

Bandar IOI hall here yesterday. Dr Zaliha, who is Sekijang member of parliament, said despite the recent spike in Covid-19 cases, the situation was under

control as most hospitalised patients were in the high-risk group; they had comorbidities or were senior citizens.

She advised the public to con-

tinue exercising self-control, including wearing face masks if necessary, especially for those with symptoms, and to maintain personal hygiene. **Bernama**

SELVAX

## 1,500 free shots of pneumococcal vaccine for Selangor pilgrims

**SHAH ALAM:** The Selangor government, through its Public Health Standing Committee, will continue the Selangor Vaccination Programme (Selvax) by offering 1,500 free shots of the pneumococcal vaccine to haj pilgrims.

State Public Health, Unity, Women Empowerment and Family Committee chairman Dr Siti Mariyah Mahmud said the move was aimed at protecting pilgrims from lung infections during the haj.

"A total of 1,500 vaccine doses will be given to Selangor pilgrims who will attend the Haji Perdana course tomorrow (today) at Masjid Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah," she said yesterday.

She said pre-registration for the free vaccine shots opened yesterday in the Selangkah application.

"For pilgrims who cannot register online, a registration desk will be set up at the mosque.

"Pilgrims from outside Shah Alam are strongly advised to get vaccinated on the set date.

"Pilgrims living in or near Shah Alam can get the free pneumococcal vaccine from May 8 to June 15, 9am to 5pm, at Klinik Selcare Universiti Selangor."

Vaccine pre-registration instructions can be viewed at vt.tiktok.com/ZS8KXbUev/. For more information, call the Selcare hotline at 1-800-22-6600. **Bernama**

## Hisham: Malaysia must stay vigilant

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia must strengthen the healthcare system, invest in public health and continue promoting the use of the face mask even though the World Health Organisation has lifted the Covid-19 global health emergency.

Former Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, who played an instrumental role in managing the healthcare system and fighting the Covid-19 pandemic, said he believed the country must remain vigilant.

"The (WHO) announcement was about ending the Covid-19 global emergency. But locally, we should do the needful, like facing any other infection and outbreak.

"More importantly, every country needs to step up surveillance, strengthen the health system and invest more in public healthcare.

"We should continue to empower the public to protect themselves, including wearing a face mask if they experience Covid-19 symptoms," he told the *New Sunday Times*.

Dr Noor Hisham retired recently but has not stopped advocating Covid-19 preventive measures.

He said the fight against Covid-19 continued as the virus is still around.

Dr Noor Hisham, who was in Adelaide, Australia, recently for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons 91st Annual Scientific Conference, reminded the public to frequently wash their hands and avoid crowded and confined spaces, if possible, and stay at home if they were symptomatic.

He expressed gratitude to frontliners and the nation for coming

together to make the impossible possible.

He said: "Our response today is our preparation and preparedness for the future."

He thanked frontliners from the Health Ministry and other ministries for their tireless efforts in the fight against the pandemic.

"It shows when we are together, we can make a big difference in healthcare and saving lives.

"Gladly, the public health emergency of international concern is over.

"We brought up this issue to be addressed and discussed during the Standing Committee on Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies meeting in Geneva last month, which I chaired as the president. Right timing for my retirement."



Former Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah says the fight against Covid-19 continues as the virus is still around. FILE PIC

He said although Covid-19 infections were less severe now, the risks to vulnerable populations were ever present.

Hence, high-risk groups and

vulnerable people, including senior citizens and individuals with comorbidities, should take vaccine booster shots to improve protection against the virus, he said.

AKHBAR : SUNDAY STAR  
MUKA SURAT : 8  
RUANGAN : NATION

## Covid-19 measures to remain for now

**SEGAMAT:** For the time being, Malaysia will maintain its current measures against Covid-19 even as the World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared that the pandemic is no longer a global public health emergency.

"For the time being, the Health Ministry will continue with Covid-19 control measures or standard operating procedures (SOP) until we decide whether or not to follow the WHO's recommendations," said Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa as reported by Bernama.

"Discussions at the ministry's highest level are being held to consider the matter," she told reporters at the Aidilfitri open house for the Sekijang parliamentary constituency at the IOI Bandar Mosque Hall here today.

The Sekijang MP said that Malaysia's Covid-19 situation was still under control despite the recent spike in cases, as the majority of patients who have been hospitalised are those with comorbidities and the elderly.

Dr Zaliha advised the public to

continue to exercise caution such as by wearing a face mask in public, especially those with symptoms, and to maintain good personal hygiene.

The WHO declared on Friday that the global coronavirus pandemic is no longer an international health emergency.

**FOR MORE STORIES** See page 33

# Be on guard for future outbreaks



**Better to be safe:** Visitors at the Penang Hill funicular train station keeping their face masks on in George Town, Penang. — LIM BENG TATT/The Star

## Keep mask on, experts warn of new infections

By **IMRAN HILMY**  
imran@thestar.com.my

**GEORGE TOWN:** Although the Covid-19 global emergency has been declared over, experts have warned Malaysians to be on guard for future outbreaks and to continue to mask up in public as new infections are slowly rising.

Infections in Malaysia went up by 3% from 4,817 to 4,963 cases during epidemiological week (ME17) between April 23-29 even as the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared an end to the three-year public health emergency.

Despite the rise in cases, Universiti Sains Malaysia virologist Dr Kumitaa Theva Das said the situation was still very much under control so long as everyone continued to wear masks in enclosed spaces.

"Looking at the 14-day period, we do see some states recording a rise in cases, such as Johor, Kedah and Sarawak. But we also see an almost equal number of states such as Melaka, Perak and Sabah with a decline in cases," she told *The Star*.

Dr Kumitaa said when the Delta variant led to a wave of infections in 2021, there were a high number of hospitalisations, ICU cases and deaths.

But now, the number of such severe cases have gone down due

to the high rate of vaccination and people taking booster shots.

"Masking also helps tremendously and is one of the easiest and cheapest ways to protect ourselves," she said, adding that Malaysians should adapt to living with the virus.

The senior lecturer advised the public to get tested early once Covid-19 symptoms develop and to stay at home if one tests positive for the virus.

On May 5, Health director-general Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan had said that data from the Health Ministry's Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre (CPRC), showed that the number of Covid-19 admissions to public health facilities had increased from 4.8% per 100,000 population to 5.8%.

Echoing Dr Kumitaa's points, Penang Hospital infectious disease unit head Datuk Dr Chow Ting Soo advised those in the high-risk group to self-test as early as possible and to take anti-viral medicines as a precaution once they start feeling unwell.

"The high-risk group should also get a second booster to prevent any infections from turning more severe," Dr Chow told *The Star*.

Universiti Malaya Emeritus Professor Datuk Dr Lam Sai Kit, who is a member of an international Covid-19 task force, said: "After

three long years of the pandemic, and with the decrease in cases and severity over the last year, it is time for life to return to normal.

"As a matter of fact, Malaysia adopted the stand that the Covid-19 pandemic would transition into the endemic phase from April 1, 2022, a year before the WHO Declaration last Friday," Dr Lam said in a statement.

"What is important now is to review how the world handled the pandemic at the global level, and the many lessons that can help us face the next pandemic."

On whether China had been fully transparent in sharing data about the early days of the outbreak in Dec 2019, Dr Lam said this issue had been politicised and was now considered academic.

"The lesson we should learn is that speed is of the essence in the sharing of information as we now live in a borderless world, where an outbreak in one country can turn into a pandemic in a matter of weeks and months."

Dr Lam said the virus was going to be with us for a long time just like dengue and influenza.

"We must learn to live with it. Variants will arise from time to time, but we now have better knowledge and tools to handle future outbreaks. While we continue to battle Covid-19, we must prepare for the next one."