

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Penularan COVID-19

Jumlah kes import catat kenaikan

Jangkitan baharu, kemasukan pesakit ke hospital turut meningkat

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Putrajaya: Jumlah kes import, iaitu pesakit COVID-19 yang mendapat jangkitan dari luar negara meningkat sebanyak 67.3 kali ganda pada Minggu Epidemiologi (ME) ke-25/2022.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata pada minggu sebelumnya, jumlah kes import hanya mencatatkan lapan kes, bagaimanapun jumlah itu terus meningkat pada ME 25/2022 dengan 538 kes.

Katanya, selain kes import,

jumlah penularan kes baharu dan kemasukan pesakit COVID-19 ke hospital turut meningkat pada ME 25/2022 atau sepanjang tempoh 19 Jun hingga Sabtu lalu.

"Bilangan kes baharu bagi ME 25/2022 meningkat sebanyak 10.9 peratus bersamaan 15,739 kes berbanding minggu sebelumnya yang mencatatkan 14,195 kes, manakala jumlah kes tempatan meningkat sebanyak 7.1 peratus, iaitu daripada 14,187 kes kepada 15,201 kes.

"Purata kes aktif setiap hari bagi ME 25/2022 adalah 26,946, iaitu terdapat peningkatan sebanyak 12.1 peratus berbanding minggu sebelumnya. Bagaimanapun, bilangan kes sembuh turut meningkat, iaitu sebanyak 33.8 peratus (10,524 kes kepada 14,078 kes)," katanya dalam kenyataan, semalam.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, bagi jumlah kes kematian membabitkan pesakit COVID-19, ia menunjukkan penurunan 38.1 peratus, iaitu daripada 21 kes pada

minggu sebelumnya dan 13 kes pada ME 25/2022.

Mengenai jumlah kemasukan pesakit COVID-19 ke fasiliti kesihatan, termasuk Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan COVID-19 (PKRC) awam, beliau berkata, bagi setiap 100,000 penduduk, ia meningkat sebanyak 11 peratus ME 25/2022.

"Selain itu, jumlah pesakit COVID-19 ke hospital awam bagi setiap 100,000 penduduk meningkat sebanyak 28 peratus. Pesakit kategori 1 dan 2 meningkat sebanyak 14 peratus manakala pesakit kategori 3, 4, dan 5, meningkat sebanyak 45 peratus.

"Bagaimanapun, penggunaan katil bukan kritikal, katil Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU) dan katil di PKRC tiada perubahan. Namun, jumlah pesakit memerlukan alat bantuan pernafasan (ABP) meningkat sebanyak 0.1 peratus," katanya.

Mengulas lanjut, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, kes positif COVID-19 yang dipantau oleh Pusat Penilaian COVID-19 (CAC) di se-

luruh negara juga menunjukkan trend peningkatan.

"Bilangan kedatangan pesakit ke CAC meningkat sebanyak 22.0 peratus, bilangan kes COVID-19 baharu yang menjalani peman-tauan di rumah meningkat sebanyak 16.5 peratus dan bilangan kes COVID-19 yang dirujuk CAC ke PKRC atau hospital meningkat sebanyak 18.9 peratus," katanya.

Mengenai pesakit jangkitan pernafasan akut teruk (SARI) dan kes Penyakit Seperti Influenza (ILI) membabitkan kes COVID-19, Dr Noor Hisham memaklumkan, hasil surveilans di seluruh negara menunjukkan berlaku penurunan.

"Kadar positif sampel ILI bagi COVID-19 dalam trend statik sebanyak 6.0 peratus pada ME 25/2022 berbanding ME 24/2022 dan kadar positif sampel SARI bagi COVID-19 pada ME 25/2022 menunjukkan trend menurun daripada 4.4 peratus pada ME 24/2022 kepada 0.0 peratus pada ME 25/2022," katanya.

Jumlah pesakit COVID-19 ke hospital awam

bagi setiap 100,000 penduduk meningkat sebanyak 28 peratus. Pesakit kategori 1 dan 2 meningkat sebanyak 14 peratus



Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah,
Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : LOKAL

KEKANG PENULARAN INFLUENZA DALAM KOMUNITI

Cadang beri vaksin ILI percuma

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Kuala Lumpur

Kerajaan perlu menawarkan suntikan vaksin percuma bagi Influenza-Like-Illness (ILI) khususnya di kawasan wabak bagi mengekang penularan penyakit itu dalam komuniti.

Pensyarah Jabatan Kesihatan Komuniti Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh berkata, suntikan percuma ini mampu membantu komuniti khususnya mereka yang kurang berkemampuan.

Menurutnya, influenza

bukan satu wabak yang baharu dalam negara ini kerana ia sudah dikategorikan sebagai endemik sama seperti denggi.

"Kita mahu masyarakat dilindungi dengan meluas kerana influenza juga boleh membawa implikasi kesihatan yang serius seperti serangan otak dan sistem paru-paru jika tiada perlindungan.

"Influenza sudah lama dalam komuniti namun sejak beberapa tahun kebelakangan ini fokus hanya pada Covid-19 namun kita harus sedar kesan wabak ini boleh bertukar serius jika dipandang remeh," katanya kepada Harian Metro.

Beliau berkata, penularan dalam kluster seperti seko-

lah berasrama perlu diberi perhatian agar penularan boleh dikawal sebaik mungkin.

Katanya, penyaringan lebih meluas mampu mengesan penyakit ini lebih awal seterusnya membantu agensi kesihatan mengambil langkah yang sesuai untuk mengekang wabak berkenaan.

"Simptom penyakit ini sama dengan Covid-19 iaitu demam, selesema, batuk dan sakit sendi menyebabkan orang ramai beranggapan mereka hanya mengalami sakit biasa tanpa sedar sudah dijangkiti influenza.

"Disebabkan itu, ada antara mereka tidak mengambil langkah pencegahan sehingga mengun-

dang implikasi kepada kesihatan," katanya.

Menteri Kesihatan Khairy Jamaluddin dilapor berkata, kes ILI dalam negara masih terkawal walaupun terdapat beberapa kluster membabitkan sekolah berasrama di-kesan.

Khairy turut menjelaskan sekiranya kes penyakit terbahit sudah berada pada tahap membimbangkan setelah penilaian dibuat, maka langkah-langkah tertentu akan di-

laksanakan secepat mungkin. Jumaat lalu, media

Katanya, kes seperti influenza ini kes biasa dan bermusim yang akan datang dan pergi, jadi tidak perlu

melaporkan Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri (JKN) Selangor mengesan peningkatan kes jangkitan ILI di institusi pendidikan, khususnya sekolah berasrama sejak dua minggu lalu.

"Kita perlu sedar kesan wabak ini boleh bertukar serius"
Dr Sharifa Ezat



Kes import meningkat 67.3 kali ganda

Putrajaya: Waspada berkaitan jumlah kes import membabitkan pesakit Covid-19 yang mendapat jangkitan dari luar negara menunjukkan peningkatan sebanyak 67.3 kali ganda pada Minggu Epidemiologi (ME) ke-25/2022.

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"Bilangan kes baharu bagi ME 25/2022 meningkat sebanyak 10.9 peratus bersamaan 15,739 kes berbanding minggu sebelumnya yang mencatatkan 14,195 kes, manakala jumlah kes tempatan meningkat sebanyak 7.1 peratus iaitu da-



KADAR jangkitan Covid-19 dari luar negara terus meningkat.

ripada 14,187 kes kepada 15,201 kes.

"Purata kes aktif setiap hari bagi ME 25/2022 adalah 26,946 iaitu terdapat peningkatan sebanyak 12.1 peratus berbanding minggu sebelumnya. Bagaimanapun, bilangan kes sembuh turut meningkat iaitu sebanyak 33.8 peratus (10,524 kes kepada 14,078 kes)," katanya semalam.

Tambah Dr Noor Hisham, bagi jumlah kes kematian membabitkan pe-

masuk pesakit Covid-19 ke fasiliti kesihatan termasuk Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan Covid-19 (PKRC) awam, Dr Noor Hisham berkata bagi setiap 100,000 penduduk, ia meningkat sebanyak 11 peratus ME 25/2022.

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Jumlah kes kematian dicatatkan pada ME 25/2022

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 16

RUANGAN : LOKAL

BINA PAWAGAM DI KELANTAN**'Perlu rujuk PBT'**

Putrajaya: Isu pembinaan panggung wayang di Kelantan perlu dirujuk kepada pihak berkuasa tempatan (PBT) untuk kelulusan.

Ketua Dewan Muslimat Pas Kelantan, Datuk Siti Zailah Mohd Yusoff berkata, kerajaan di negeri yang menerima jolokan Serambi Mekah tidak menghalang kewujudan panggung wayang namun terdapat beberapa perkara tidak dipatuhi sekiranya panggung wayang dibenarkan.

Katanya, sesuatu pembangunan atau program dilaksanakan di negeri itu perlu membawa kesan positif kepada masyarakat.

"Sebenarnya Kelantan ada garis panduan, bukan sekat tetapi mereka tidak patuhi syarat dan mungkin menjadi penyebab. Kita lihat setiap pembinaan perlu beri kesan positif kepada masyarakat.

"Jadi, saya kira mungkin itu PBT (bina panggung wayang) sebab ini di bawah PBT. Mungkin Exco PBT boleh jawab isu ni," katanya

selepas menghadiri Majlis Perasmian Program Media #AnakMalaysiaSihat di Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) di sini, semalam.

Turut hadir, Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika ditanya mengenai ciapan bekas Ketua Pemuda Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM), Khalid Ismath berkenaan tindakan Ketua Pemuda Pas,

Ahmad Fadhi Shaari yang menonton filem Mat Kilau di panggung wayang di ibu negara, baru-baru ini.

Khalid Ismath melalui ciapannya kelmarin berkata, "Di Kelantan, bila rakyat minta bina panggung wayang, Pas kata haram tetapi ulama Pas pergi tengok wayang di KL tak haram," katanya.

Sebelum ini, Pemuda Pas menerusi hantaran di Facebook mempertahankan tindakan Ahmad Fadhi apabila menyatakan tidak haram menonton wayang sebagaimana dilakukan Ketua Pemuda itu.

"Kelantan ada garis panduan bukan sekat, tapi mereka tidak patuhi syarat"

Siti Zailah



SITI Zailah menjawab soalan media pada Majlis Perasmian Program Media #AnakMalaysiaSihat.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
 MUKA SURAT : 4
 RUANGAN : NEGARA

Kanak-kanak bawah 5 tahun di empat negeri terbantut

PUTRAJAYA - Malaysia kini berdepan masalah pemakanan apabila terdapat peningkatan masalah kekurangan pemakanan dalam kalangan kanak-kanak bawah 5 tahun dan kadar obesiti bagi orang dewasa.

Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar berkata, masalah ini berlaku hampir di semua negeri dengan peratusan tertinggi dicatatkan di Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang dan Putrajaya.

Jelas beliau, harga susu formula dan makanan protein menjadi antara perkara penting yang akan diberi tumpuan oleh Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) bagi menjayakan usaha mengatasi masalah bantut dalam kalangan kanak-kanak Malaysia.

"Masalah bantut tidak boleh dipandang ringan kerana bukan sahaja memberi cabaran kesihatan mental, fizikal mahupun pergaulan sosial tetapi lebih buruk, masalah bantut yang boleh membawa maut," kata Khairy Jamaluddin.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika diminta mengulas isu harga susu formula bagi mengatasi masalah bantut pada sidang akhbar sempena pelancaran Pro-



HARGA susu yang dikatakan tidak mampu milik antara penyumbang kepada kanak-kanak ada masalah bantut. - AFP

gram Media *#AnakMalaysiaSihat* di pejabatnya di sini semalam.

Khairy Jamaluddin menambah, kementeriannya akan mencari jalan penyelesaian melalui jawatankuasa kerana mahu memastikan akses harga makanan protein dan susu mampu milik.

"Senang sahaja mahu meminta ibu bapa beli susu tetapi isunya, harga yang tidak mampu,"

jelas beliau.

Ketika mengulas mengenai isu bantut di Putrajaya, beliau berkata, isu di Putrajaya perlu kajian mendalam bagi mengenal pasti faktor sebenar.

"Ada sesuatu yang tidak betul kenapa Putrajaya antara yang mempunyai pendapatan tinggi di Malaysia tetapi ada masalah bantut dan obesiti," katanya.

Berjaga-jaga dengan kenaikan kes Covid-19

GEORGE TOWN - Kerajaan negeri Pulau Pinang meminta orang ramai supaya tidak leka dan terus berjaga-jaga berikutan kes jangkitan Covid-19 menunjukkan trend peningkatan semula di negeri itu.

Ketua Menteri, Chow Kon Yeow berkata, laporan Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Pulau Pinang (JKNPP) menunjukkan berlaku peningkatan 6.4 peratus dari minggu epid ke-24 hingga minggu epid ke-25 (12 hingga 25 Jun) dalam jangkitan Covid-19 di negeri ini.

"Walaupun jumlah kes jangkitan tidak lagi diumumkan, kita masih lagi memantau situasi terkini jangkitan Covid-19 di Pulau Pinang dan kita perlu terus berwaspada.

"Jika kita lihat dari minggu epid ke-24 hingga minggu epid 25, bilangan kes naik sehingga 6.4 peratus iaitu dari 1,007 kes dalam minggu ke-24 kepada 1,072 kes pada minggu ke-25," katanya dalam sidang akhbar di Komtar di sini semalam.

Sebelum ini, Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin berkata, Malaysia dijangka menghadapi gelombang baharu Covid-19 lebih awal berbanding tempoh dua atau tiga bulan

yang diumumkan sebelum ini.

Beliau memaklumkan, jangkitan awal itu bukan untuk menimbulkan panik dalam kalangan masyarakat, sebaliknya ia mengambil kira kepada langkah pencegahan yang perlu diambil meliputi setiap aspek oleh semua pihak terlibat.

Menurut Kon Yeow, setakat ini tiada kluster aktif dalam kalangan komuniti dikenal pasti biarpun kes harian pada 25 Jun lalu mencecah 173 kes sehari.

Bagaimanapun, katanya, pada minggu lalu terdapat 12 kemasukan pesakit Covid-19 ke hospital di negeri ini dan ini merupakan satu statistik penting yang perlu diambil kira oleh semua pihak.

"Sebelum ini, sejak pembukaan sempadan negara, tiada kes kemasukan pesakit Covid-19 ke hospital, namun minggu lalu 12 pesakit dimasukkan ke hospital akibat jangkitan Covid-19.

"Keadaan masih terkawal namun kita mesti terus kekalkan prosedur operasi standard seperti memakai pelitup muka ketika berada di tempat-tempat sesak untuk memastikan keselamatan masing-masing," katanya.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Harga susu formula tinggi fokus KKM

Bantu atasi masalah bantut dalam kalangan kanak-kanak berusia lima tahun ke bawah

Oleh **TUAN BUQHAIKHAH TUAN MUHAMAD ADNAN**
PUTRAJAYA

Harga susu formula yang tinggi dan akses sumber protein antara tumpuan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) bagi mengatasi masalah bantut dalam kalangan kanak-kanak berusia lima tahun ke bawah.

Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar berkata, Jawatankuasa Khas memerangi masalah beban berganda malpemakanan dalam kalangan kanak-kanak turut meneliti faktor pemakanan, persekitaran dan kemudahan dikatakan mendorong peningkatan kadar bantut yang tinggi.

"Semua isu berkaitan dengan nutrisi dan pemakanan akan ditangani oleh jawatankuasa ini termasuklah penyediaan

makanan, akses kepada makanan yang mencukupi, harga makanan daripada sumber protein serta susu adalah mampu milik," katanya.

Menurutnya, harga kepada makanan daripada sumber protein yang tinggi akan menyukarkan usaha memerangi masalah tersebut.

"Kita faham senang untuk kerajaan minta ibu bapa beli susu dan makanan sihat tetapi pokok pangkal adalah harga yang tidak menentu," katanya menerusi sidang akhbar selepas merasmikan program #AnakMalaysiaSihat di kementeriannya di sini pada Isnin.

Turut hadir, Timbalan Menteri Pembangunan Wanita Keluarga Malaysia, Datuk Siti Zailah Mohd Yusoff.

Beliau berkata, masalah bantut tidak boleh dipandang ringan kerana ia bukan sahaja memberi cabaran kesihatan mental, fizikal mahupun pergaulan sosial malah lebih buruk ia boleh membawa maut.

"Ini merupakan masalah kekurangan zat makanan kronik, di mana kanak-kanak tidak mendapat makanan yang mencukupi dari segi kuantiti dan kualiti dalam suatu tempoh masa lama.

"Akibatnya golongan itu tidak dapat membesar dengan sempurna selain tidak mencapai ketinggian yang sepatutnya. Data tahun 2019 menunjukkan 21.8 per-



Khairy Jamaluddin (dua dari kiri) pada sidang media selepas merasmikan Program Media #AnakMalaysiaSihat di Kementerian Kesihatan pada Isnin.

ratus kanak-kanak di negara ini mengalami masalah bantut dan saya percaya peratusan ini meningkat pada masa ini," katanya.

Menurutnya, KKM menyasarkan masalah bantut dikurangkan sehingga lapan peratus menjelang tahun 2030.

Sementara itu, mengulas mengenai kanak-kanak di Putrajaya antara negeri yang tertinggi melaporkan kes bantut, Khairy berkata, jawatankuasa khas tersebut akan mengenalpasti punca berkaitan.

Kes baharu Covid-19 di Malaysia terus tunjuk peningkatan



DR NOOR HISHAM

KUALA LUMPUR - Kes baharu harian Covid-19 terus menunjukkan peningkatan apabila merekodkan kenaikan sebanyak 10.9 peratus iaitu 15,739 pada minggu epidemiologi (ME) ke-25 dari 19 hingga 25 Jun berbanding 14,195 kes pada minggu sebelumnya.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, bagaimanapun bilangan kes kematian menunjukkan penurunan kepada 38.1 peratus iaitu 13 kes berbanding 21 kes pada minggu sebelumnya.

"Bilangan kes sembuh pada ME ke-25 pula meningkat se-

banyak 33.8 peratus iaitu 10,524 kes kepada 14,078 kes," katanya dalam kenyataan pada Isnin.

Menguji lanjut, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, jumlah kemasukan pesakit ke fasiliti kesihatan (hospital dan PKRC awam) bagi setiap 100,000 penduduk meningkat 11 peratus pada ME ke-25 berbanding minggu sebelumnya.

"Jumlah kemasukan pesakit ke hospital awam bagi setiap 100,000 penduduk meningkat sebanyak 28 peratus, dengan pesakit kategori 1 dan 2 meningkat 14 peratus manakala pesakit kategori 3, 4, dan 5 me-

ningkat 45 peratus, katanya.

Beliau berkata, bagi trend kes aktif harian yang dipantau secara maya (CAC Maya), terdapat peningkatan sebanyak 27.1 peratus pada akhir ME ke-25 berbanding pada akhir ME ke-24 iaitu daripada 27,247 kes kepada 34,639 kes.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, purata nilai RT juga menunjukkan penurunan sebanyak 1.9 peratus pada ME ke-25 berbanding ME ke-24.

Sehingga kini, katanya terdapat lapan kluster Covid-19 yang masih aktif dan dipantau di negara ini. - Bernama

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA

MUKA SURAT : 12

RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

Harga susu formula dalam radar KKM

PUTRAJAYA: Harga susu formula dan makanan protein menjadi antara perkara penting yang akan diberi tumpuan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) bagi menjayakan usaha mengatasi masalah bantut dalam kalangan kanak-kanak Malaysia.

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“Malaysia sedang berdepan dengan masalah beban berganda di mana terdapat peningkatan kepada masalah kekurangan pemakanan dalam kalangan kanak-kanak bawah lima tahun serta peningkatan kadar obesiti dalam kalangan dewasa.

“Masalah ini berlaku hampir di semua negeri dengan peratusan tertinggi dicatatkan di Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang dan Putrajaya. Ini menunjukkan masalah ini merentasi semua kategori sosiodemografi sama ada bandar atau luar bandar, pendapatan isi rumah, kumpulan etnik, pekerjaan dan tahap pendidikan.

“Kita akan mencari jalan penyelesaian melalui jawatan kuasa ini kerana mahu memastikan akses harga makanan protein dan susu mampu milik. Senang sahaja mahu meminta ibu bapa beli susu, tetapi isunya, harga yang tidak mampu,” katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika diminta mengulas isu harga susu formula bagi mengatasi masalah bantut dalam sidang akhbar sempena pelancaran Program Media #AnakMalaysiaSihat di pejabatnya.

Ketika diminta mengulas sama ada isu bantut di Putrajaya, Khairy berkata, isu di Putrajaya perlu kajian mendalam bagi mengenal pasti faktor sebenar.

Katanya, sihat itu bu-

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NATION

'Spread of influenza-like illness depends on population's immunity'

PETALING JAYA: The spread of influenza or influenza-like illness (ILI) in the community will depend on the population's immunity and extent of social interactions, say medical experts.

Universiti Putra Malaysia epidemiologist Assoc Prof Dr Malina Osman said 35% to 45% of ILI cases were caused by influenza viruses, while others were from respiratory viruses such as human respiratory syncytial virus (HRSV) and human parainfluenza viruses (HPIV), including parainfluenza virus type 4, rhinovirus, adenovirus, human coronaviruses and

human metapneumovirus.

"Influenza virus illnesses usually have a certain pattern in temperate countries, depending on seasons, while in tropical countries like Malaysia, ILI can occur throughout the year.

"There are vaccines produced against influenza yearly depending on mutations or the emergence of variants," she said.

She said lower immunity and increased social interactions will increase the spread of ILI.

"During this transition to endemic phase, we should be continuously vigilant to monitor the spread as ILI

may also be one of the features of Covid-19 infection," she said.

Prof Malina said ILI infection was similar to Covid-19, which is through direct contact with body fluid that can be transmitted through the eye, nose and mouth or through droplets in close confined spaces.

She said symptoms included high grade fevers at above 38.5°C with prominent respiratory symptoms like coughs, nasal congestion, sore throat and localised chest pain or tightness related to respiration; or vomiting and convulsions for infants.

She said worsening symptoms

could develop quite abruptly within 48 hours and will be persistent for more than three to five days.

Universiti Malaya epidemiologist Prof Datuk Dr Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud said there have been reports of co-infection of Covid-19 and influenza, although it may not be very common.

However, he said he could not find published evidence to show that people who recovered from Covid-19 had increased risk of getting ILI.

"They are caused by different viruses and someone who has been infected with Covid-19 can be infect-

ed with influenza. It is advisable for people who recovered from Covid-19 to practise non-pharmaceutical interventions and get vaccinated against influenza to reduce the risk of contracting an ILI or influenza," he said.

Dr Awang Bulgiba said if someone contracted severe Covid-19 because of a weakened immune system, that person was also likely to contract severe influenza or ILI due to the very same reason.

"This is not because of the nature of the SARS-CoV-2 virus but the reduced immune status of the individual," he said.

'Covid SOPs can prevent flu'

Face masks can significantly reduce infections, say experts

By **DIYANA PFORDTEN**
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PETALING JAYA: With the rise of influenza-like illness (ILI) in the community, reinforcing Covid-19 preventive measures such as wearing face masks could significantly reduce infections, say experts.

Hospital Teluk Intan's Emergency and Trauma Department head Dr Samsu Ambia said there had been more patients seeking treatment for ILI recently.

"During the movement control order, we usually received about 160 daily, but in the past month, we've received over 200 patients to the emergency department daily.

"About 70 of them are referred to the fever centre and most have ILI," he added.

Dr Samsu said wearing face masks would significantly reduce respiratory infections such as ILI, which is air-borne.

"I noticed that ILI is easily transmittable when family and friends meet at home and do not wear masks.

"At the hospital where I meet patients daily, such infections are rare as every medical worker wears an N95 mask," he added.

He encouraged schools to retain



Lingering sniffles: A good way to prevent infection is by physical distancing and wearing face masks in public. — YAP CHEE HONG/ The Star

the wearing of masks to reduce ILI among students.

Medical Practitioners Coalition Association of Malaysia president Dr Raj Kumar Maharajah said respiratory viruses such as ILI can linger on all kinds of surfaces such as grocery cart handles, doorknobs or the office coffee pot.

"The only way to prevent the spread of the illness is by maintaining physical distancing and using a face mask when in public, as well as washing your hands.

"Stay at home when you're sick and cover your mouth when you cough," he added.

Dr Raj Kumar encouraged people to get vaccinated against the flu, especially those above 60 years old with comorbidities, which is one of the vulnerable groups.

"With the schools now open, cross-infection can easily occur," he said.

He added that with worsening symptoms such as high fever and thick phlegm with shortness of breath, people would need treatment and tests at general practitioner (GP) clinics.

"You'll need to get some intervention like a blood test to see whether there is enough oxygen going into

your lungs," he said.

Malaysian Medical Association MMA president Dr Koh Kar Chai said ILI cases are seen in Malaysia all year round, with occasional clusters arising.

"The incidence dropped during the pandemic with the frequent lockdowns that forced people including children to stay home.

"Coupled with the various Covid-19 SOPs (standard operating procedures), cases were reduced.

"However, with everything opening up, it is no surprise to see an increase in ILI," he added.

Dr Koh said to help prevent infection among children, parents should ensure the personal hygiene of their children, which includes wearing face masks.

"Maintain a healthy lifestyle to ensure that your bodies can stave off such infections and, if infected, you will recover quickly," he added.

On Saturday, it was reported that the Selangor Health Department had detected an increase in ILI in educational institutions, especially boarding schools, over the past two weeks.

The next day, Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said ILI cases in the country are currently under control despite the rising number.

Plan to stop stunting in children gets the nod

PUTRAJAYA: The Special Committee to Combat Double Burden of Malnutrition Among Children in Malaysia approved the 2022-2030 National Strategic Plan to Address the Problem of Stunting in Children in its first meeting, says Khairy Jamaluddin.

The Health Minister said the national strategic plan would be presented to the Cabinet and the Finance Ministry so that the plan to combat malnutrition in children would be raised as a national agenda in the 2023 Budget.

"Our target is to ensure the problem of stunting among children can be reduced to at least 8% by 2030," he said after officiating the #Anak-MalaysiaSihat Media Programme yesterday.

The committee comprising personnel from the Health Ministry; Education Ministry; Women, Family and Community Development Ministry and National Unity Ministry studied the causes of stunting among children, involving nutritional and environmental factors.

According to Khairy, the special committee would also focus on examining the economic and social aspects linked to stunting including access to adequate food, milk prices and other protein sources, seen as a burden to parents.

"We ask parents to buy nutritious food but prices of these goods keep fluctuating, so the committee must also focus on socio-economic determinants as well," he said.

Khairy said stunting among children recorded an increase from 17% in 2015 to 21.8% in 2019.

He said the trend of nutritional deficiencies among children, especially those from low-income families, is expected to increase due to the protracted Covid-19 pandemic and its economic impact.

He said stunting which is the inability of children to reach their ideal height is the result of chronic malnutrition where children do not have food of adequate quality and quantity over a long period of time.

Citing a study by the United Nations Children's Fund, he said nearly half of the deaths among children under the age of five worldwide are linked to malnutrition, and stunting contributes to a million child deaths annually. — Bernama

'Stay safe as we're not out of the Covid-19 woods yet'

By **ALIZA SHAH**
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PETALING JAYA: The over 2,000 Covid-19 daily infections recorded of late, although mostly mild, are signs that Malaysians should remain steadfast in taking safety precautions, say health experts.

Checks by *The Star* at pharmacies in Hulu Kelang found that the sale of Covid-19 test kits had dropped by between 30% and 50%.

"Our sale of test kits had dropped so much that we had to launch promotions to finish our stock," one salesperson said.

Commenting on this, occupational health, emergency and public health expert Dr Hanafiah Bashirun said this was worrying as it meant people were giving less attention to Covid-19.

"Some are afraid of getting tested

because they know if they are found positive, they will be stuck at home and can't go anywhere," he said.

Since the country is transitioning to the endemic stage, he said some people were no longer concerned about the disease.

Dr Hanafiah said in the endemic phase, the number of cases is expected to fluctuate given that not everyone would abide strictly by the standard operating procedure (SOP).

"Our numbers will fluctuate because not everyone will follow the guidelines. But for me, it is simple.

"You should take care of yourself and your family," he said.

Former deputy health director-general Prof Datuk Dr Lokman Hakim Sulaiman, however, is not too concerned with the drop in the sale of test kits.

"You should take care of yourself and your family."

Dr Hanafiah Bashirun

The people, he said, should only be tested if they have symptoms.

Universiti Putra Malaysia epidemiologist Assoc Prof Dr Malina Osman noted that about 10% to 30% of Malaysians failed to abide by the SOP.

"Maintaining the SOP is important to protect the high-risk groups."

"The SOP should be practised as usual, even though severe cases are fewer now, as reflected by the number of people hospitalised and those

who receive treatment in intensive care units, compared to during the Delta wave last year.

"We have to maintain the SOP as recommended as we have to protect those who can't be vaccinated medically and also to protect high-risk groups who could potentially be exposed to severe infection if a breakthrough infection occurs," she said.

Dr Malina said data on those who have been admitted and treated in hospitals and death cases should be highlighted through the media so that the public can remain aware of the importance of the SOP.

She also suggested for a further review of the SOP, should the data continue to show that the majority of cases are "mild", and there is no obvious threat of incoming waves or negative impact on the healthcare system.

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Labuan sees increase in dengue cases

LABUAN: There has been a 275% rise in dengue cases from January to date here, with 15 cases recorded compared with only four during the same period last year.

The duty-free-island also saw a new case of malaria.

Labuan Health Department director Dr Ismuni Bohari said considering the increasing trend of dengue cases in many villages, routine surveillance and source reduction activities have been intensified.

He said reminders have been issued to the public and premises owners to ensure effective disposal of waste to prevent mosquito breeding.

"All government and private office buildings, including commercial establishments, will be inspected for possible mosquito breeding," he said yesterday in conjunction with the Labuan-level Asean Dengue Day.

Ismuni added that increasing awareness and eliminating vector-breeding sites are some of the measures that could help control the disease.

The *Gotong-Royong Perdana Mega 1.0 anti-Aedes* programme was launched in Labuan on Sunday, with focus on villages that are close to squatter settlements.

"These villages have been identified as having the most dengue cases. This programme is necessary to create awareness among villagers on the rising cases of dengue in their respective areas," he said. - Bernama

Rise in new infections, drop in Covid deaths

KUALA LUMPUR: The number new Covid-19 infections in the country for the 25th epidemiology week (EW25), which began from June 19 to 25, saw a 10.9% increase to 15,739 cases compared with 14,195 cases the week before.

However, Health Director-General Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said the number of deaths showed a 38.1% drop, with 13 cases compared with 21 the previous week.

"The number of recovered cases in EW25 also showed a rise of 33.8% - from 10,524 to 14,078 cases," he said in a statement yesterday.

Noor Hisham added that the admission of Covid-19 patients to public hospitals and quarantine and treatment centres, per 100,000 population, has increased by 11% compared with the earlier week.

He added that the number of admissions to public hospitals per 100,000 population increased by 28%.

"Categories One and Two patient admissions increased 14%, while categories Three, Four and Five admissions increased 45%.

"Active cases being monitored by the virtual Covid-19 Assessment Centre increased 27.1% at the end of EW25 from 27,247 to 34,639 cases."

He said the average infectivity rate showed a 1.9% drop compared with the previous week.

He added that there were eight active clusters in the country. - Bernama