

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : NATION

NST m/s 8 Nation 9/6/2025 (Isnin)

JUSTIFICATIONS TO BE REVIEWED

'Health issues, work among reasons cited by 206 National Service absentees'

JELI: Health issues and job commitments were among the reasons given by 206 individuals who failed to report for the National Service Training Programme 3.0 last month.

Deputy Defence Minister Adly Zahari said all of them were bound by the National Service Training Act 2003.

"We have already released the

list of selected individuals, but it was found that they did not register.

"We have identified several reasons provided, including health issues and work commitments.

"Therefore, we will review all the justifications they submitted for failing to report.

"We informed them not only

through notices, but also communicated directly with the individuals involved," he said after the "Program Peduli Veteran Madani" here.

Adly said the ministry would obtain a report and presentation from the National Service Training Department committee on the issue and would seek a solution.

"We do have an act that binds them.

"But before invoking it, we need to fully consider the reasons for their failure to register.

"If there is no other option, only then will we invoke the act as a means of enforcing disciplinary measures."

Previously, the media reported that the National Service Train-

ing Department had reminded those selected for NS Training 3.0 Series 2/2025 programme to report to camp no later than May 16.

According to the department, attendance is mandatory and failure to report without a valid reason or certified medical documentation would be considered defiance of orders.

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 11
RUANGAN : SPEAK UP

Dire cost of longer hours for nurses

NURSES are the backbone of healthcare worldwide and Malaysia is no exception. They serve on the frontlines in hospitals, clinics and community care settings, often working long hours to ensure patients receive timely and compassionate care.

Their importance was highlighted during the Covid-19 pandemic when Malaysian nurses risked their health to care for thousands of patients.

Despite their indispensable role, the government is considering increasing nurses' weekly work hours to 45 hours. This policy aims to address workforce shortages and meet rising healthcare demands but has met with widespread concern.

While the intent is commendable, increasing work hours without increasing support risks harming nurses' welfare, patient safety and healthcare quality.

Nurses' work hours in other countries

Globally, healthcare systems that prioritise strong protections for nurses typically maintain workweeks between 36 and 40 hours – striking a crucial balance between service demands and staff well-being.

🇬🇧 **The United Kingdom:** Nurses work around 37.5 hours weekly, with regulations limiting overtime and mandating rest breaks to prevent fatigue. The Royal College of Nursing advocates for safe working hours to uphold care quality.

🇦🇺 **Australia:** Nurses typically work 38 hours per week, with industrial awards ensuring fair shifts and rest. The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation warns that long shifts can compromise patients' safety as well as nurses.

🇸🇬 **Singapore:** Nurses generally have a 40-hour work week, with carefully managed shifts designed to minimise fatigue.

🇺🇸 **The United States:** Despite the

prevalence of 12-hour shifts, total weekly hours generally remain between 36 and 40. The American Nurses Association highlights that exceeding these hours increases errors and dissatisfaction.

In comparison, Malaysia's proposed 45-hour work week exceeds these standards, raising valid concerns.

Real cost and implications

Burnout among nurses has been recognised by the World Health Organisation as an occupational phenomenon linked to chronic workplace stress.

It manifests as emotional exhaustion, cynicism and reduced personal accomplishment. For nurses, this translates to diminished empathy, increased absenteeism and lower quality of care.

Research confirms that extended shifts and work weeks correlate with higher burnout. A study across 12 countries found that nurses working over 12-hour shifts reported significantly higher burnout levels and poorer care quality.

Another study showed nurses working more than 40 hours per week faced increased risks of depression and anxiety.

Prolonged work hours can also endanger nurses physically. Fatigue impairs cognitive function, increasing the chance of errors and accidents. Nurses working longer shifts experience higher rates of musculoskeletal injuries and needle-stick incidents.

Additionally, it causes chronic sleep deprivation, a frequent outcome associated with cardiovascular disease, obesity and a weakened immune system.

Multifaceted problem

Malaysia is grappling with a severe nursing shortage, with over 12,000 vacancies in public healthcare



During the Covid-19 pandemic, Malaysian nurses bravely risked their health to care for thousands in need. – MASRY CHE ANI/THE SUN

reported by the Health Ministry.

This shortage forces existing nurses to work longer hours and manage heavier patient loads. Simply increasing work hours without hiring more staff only shifts the burden onto nurses, accelerating burnout and turnover.

Research shows poor working conditions and excessive workloads are key reasons nurses quit. Turnover is costly, including recruitment and training expenses. It also disrupts patient care continuity and weakens institutional knowledge.

Patients' safety at risk

Patient safety is closely tied to nurses' working hours and staffing levels. Nurses working beyond 12-hour shifts are twice as likely to make errors.

Each additional hour over 40 per week increases the risk of adverse events. Fatigue impairs decision-making, vigilance and reaction times critical to safe care.

Low nurse-to-patient ratios

increase mortality, complications and hospital stay lengths. Increasing work hours without improving staffing ratios dilutes nurses' ability to provide quality care.

Professional development

Over 90% of nurses in Malaysia are women, many of whom juggle demanding professional roles with unpaid caregiving at home. This "double burden" is only intensified by extended work hours.

This imbalance increases stress and work-family conflict, especially among younger nurses and mothers, contributing to higher attrition rates.

Longer work hours also reduce time for continuing professional development (CPD), which is highly required for all nurses.

CPD is essential for maintaining clinical skills and improving patient outcomes.

Without adequate time for learning, nurses face professional stagnation, which risks the quality of healthcare delivery.

Ethical and legal considerations

Malaysia upholds international labour standards that emphasise fair working conditions, reasonable work hours and the protection of workers' rights.

Implementing a 45-hour work week for nurses could contradict these principles, potentially breaching ethical obligations and legal commitments. Such a policy not only risks compromising nurses' well-being but also undermines their professional dignity, equity and the broader values of social justice in the healthcare workforce.

Alternatives solutions

To improve healthcare sustainably, Malaysia should:

- 🔴 Maintain a 40-hour work week in line with international norms.
- 🔴 Enhance recruitment and retention by improving pay, benefits and working conditions.
- 🔴 Adopt flexible shift scheduling to reduce fatigue and burnout.
- 🔴 Provide comprehensive mental health support and burnout prevention programmes.
- 🔴 Ensure nurses have protected time for CPD and career development.

Supporting healthcare quality

Nurses are the lifeblood of Malaysia's healthcare system. Extending their work week to 45 hours will threaten their health, patient safety and the overall quality of care.

Rather than imposing longer hours, Malaysia should invest in sustainable workforce solutions that respect nurses' welfare and dignity. Only by doing so can we build a resilient healthcare system capable of delivering safe, compassionate care to all Malaysians.

Zainudin Razali is the dean at the Faculty of Nursing, IJN University College. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 5

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

BH MISS Nasional 9/6/2025 (Isnin)

Dadah zombie mungkin dihasilkan secara haram

AADK perlu siap siaga kemungkinan penggunaan lebih berleluasa

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Kuala Lumpur: Penggunaan dadah fentanil atau zombie yang dikesan di negara ini berkemungkinan dihasilkan secara haram dan bukannya disebabkan oleh penggunaan ubat di hospital.

Justeru, Pakar Pusat Penyelidikan Dadah dan Ubat-Ubatan Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Prof Dr B Vicknasingam, berkata Agensi Anti Dadah Kebangsaan (AADK) perlu bekerjasama dengan pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO) di negara ini untuk mengenal pasti setakat mana penggunaannya.

Beliau yang juga Panel Pakar Pergantungan Dadah Pertubuhan Pakar Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) berkata, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) perlu peka ketika memantau pesakit yang datang ke wad kecemasan sekiranya un-



tuk mendapatkan rawatan pengambilan berlebihan selepas menggunakan fentanil.

"Fentanil adalah dadah jenis opiod yang digunakan sebagai ubat untuk menahan sakit ketika doktor mahu melakukan pembedahan atau selepas pembedahan.

"Sama seperti di Amerika Syarikat (AS) kebanyakannya dihasilkan daripada sumber yang haram dan dilakukan secara sendiri, disebabkan itu Presidennya, Donald Trump mahu menghentikan kemasukan fentanil ini dari Mexico dan China," katanya kepada BH.

Laporan eksklusif BH kelmarin mendedahkan dadah fentanil atau 'dadah zombie' kini kian menular di negara ini dan digunakan secara meluas di Lembah Klang dan Johor.

Dadah itu dikatakan memberi kesan 100 kali lebih kuat berbanding morfin. Dalam sektor kesihatan, dadah itu digunakan se-



Agensi Anti Dadah Kebangsaan (AADK) perlu bekerjasama dengan pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO) di negara ini untuk mengenal pasti setakat mana penggunaannya

Dr B Vicknasingam,
Pakar Pusat Penyelidikan Dadah dan Ubat-Ubatan USM

bagai bius dalam bentuk suntikan di hospital dan ubat tahan sakit yang kuat.

Dikesan dalam air kumbahan

Namun, persampelan yang dilakukan oleh Polis Diraja Malaysia (PDRM) bersama Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) mendapati, dadah berkenaan kini dikesan dalam air kumbahan yang diambil di 14 daerah di negara ini.

Vicknasingam berkata, persampelan dari air kumbahan dapat mengetahui jika sesuatu jenis dadah itu wujud dalam sesuatu komuniti berkenaan.

"AADK, KKM dan NGO memberikan rawatan dan pemulihan harus menguji penggunaan dadah jenis fentanil supaya gam-

baran lebih menyeluruh dapat diperoleh.

Hal ini kerana ujian urin dibuat AADK difahamkan hanya boleh mengesan antara lima hingga tujuh jenis dadah dan fentanil ini tidak termasuk," katanya.

Dalam pada itu, Vicknasingam berkata kerajaan perlu bersiap siaga menghadapi ancaman penularan fentanil di dalam negara ini.

"AADK kena siap siaga dengan kemungkinan penggunaannya lebih berleluasa kerana fentanil ini adalah sintetik opiod yang sangat kuat.

"AADK dan KKM harus mempunyai protokol rawatan serta bersiap sedia untuk menghadapi gejala ini," katanya.

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 5
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

BH M/S 5 Nasional 9/6/2025 (Isnin)

'Jangan buang najis, basuh perut haiwan di sungai'

Kuala Lumpur: Orang ramai diingatkan supaya tidak membasuh najis dan organ dalaman haiwan korban ke dalam sungai ketika menjalankan ibadah berkenaan.

Public Health Malaysia (PHM) menerusi kenyataan di Facebook mengeluarkan peringatan itu selepas mendapati ia masih dilakukan oleh segelintir pihak.

Katanya, pengendalian organ dalam najis perlu dilakukan dalam jarak sekurang-kurangnya 50 hingga 100 meter dari sungai, longkang atau sumber air awam.

"Setiap kali tiba musim korban, amalan ibadah ini membuka ruang untuk kita berbuat baik, bukan sahaja kepada sesama manusia, tetapi juga kepada alam sekitar.

"Namun sayangnya, masih berlaku perbuatan membasuh najis dan perut lembu terus ke dalam

sungai. Niat mahu membersihkan, tapi tindakan ini membawa lebih banyak kemudaratan," katanya menerusi hantaran, semalam.

PHM menjelaskan, perut dan usus haiwan korban tidak boleh dibasuh di sungai.

Katanya, pihak yang terabit perlu menyediakan lubang atau tong najis khas yang dikambus selepas digunakan.

"Sebaiknya, najis dan organ buangan dikumpulkan dalam plastik hitam tebal dan dihantar ke tapak pelupusan serta ditanam sisa haiwan ke dalam lubang yang dalam serta jauh dari sungai dan rumah.

"Jangan biarkan sisa terbuka atau dimakan haiwan liar. Sungai itu hidup. Ia bukan tong sampah," katanya sambil menegaskan air yang mengalir akan sampai ke tubuh manusia.



Membuang najis dan membasuh perut haiwan ke dalam sungai boleh memudaratkan kesihatan manusia dan alam sekitar.