

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : NATION

242 drinks reformulated to contain less sugar

KUALA LUMPUR: A total of 242 beverage products have been reformulated to contain less sugar for the Malaysian market under the Healthier Choice Logo initiative, following the introduction of sugar tax on sugary drinks, says Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

The Health Minister said this was revealed in the Impact and Effectiveness Assessment of the Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Tax conducted in 2022, after the tax was implemented in 2019.

“Producers of sugary drinks have reformulated their products to lower sugar levels in order to avoid paying the tax,” he said during a question-and-answer session in the Dewan Negara here yesterday, Bernama reported.

He was responding to Senator Susan Chemera Anding’s query on the effectiveness of the sugar tax and its positive impact on



On the right track: Dzulkefly says youths and the B40 group have benefited from the initiative to reduce sugar in drinks. — Bernama

public health.

The study also showed that the 40 sen per litre sugar tax had min-

imal impact on market prices, resulting in only a 2.24% increase, compared with the anticipated

8.83%, Dzulkefly said.

“What’s more significant is that the tax had successfully reduced sugary drink consumption, particularly among adolescents, with a decline from 36.9% to 16.4%.

“Youths and the lower-income B40 group, who are the largest consumers of sugary drinks, have benefited most from this initiative,” he added.

He said according to the findings from the 2022 National Health and Morbidity Survey: Adolescent Health Survey, the prevalence of daily carbonated drink consumption dropped from 36.9% in 2019 to 32.4% in 2022.

The Health Ministry anticipates even greater reductions in sugar consumption with the government’s recent announcement to raise the sugar tax to 90sen per litre, Dzulkefly added.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Elak bayar cukai minuman bergula

242 produk minuman telah diformulasi semula kepada kurang gula untuk dijual di pasaran Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR

Sebanyak 242 produk minuman telah diformulasi semula kepada kurang gula untuk dijual di pasaran Malaysia di bawah Inisiatif Healthier Choice Logo (HCL) susulan pelaksanaan cukai terhadap minuman bergula.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad berkata, ia hasil Kajian Penilaian Impak dan Keberkesanan Pengenaan Cukai Terhadap Minuman Manis Bergula di Malaysia yang dijalankan pada 2022 selepas dua tahun pelaksanaan cukai itu yang dimulakan pada 2019.

"Syarikat pengeluar minuman manis bergula telah mengubah formulasi produk mereka kepada minuman kurang gula bagi mengelakkan membayar cukai terbabit," katanya pada sesi soal jawab di Dewan Negara pada Isnin.

Beliau menjawab soalan Senator Susan Chemerau Anding



Dr Dzulkefly ketika di Dewan Negara, Bangunan Parlimen pada Isnin.

mengenai keberhasilan yang dicapai melalui pelaksanaan cukai gula oleh kerajaan dan sama ada ia dapat memberi kesan positif kepada impak kesihatan awam.

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, hasil kajian yang dikeluarkan tahun ini turut mendapati pengenaan cukai sebanyak 40 sen seliter telah memberi sedikit kesan, iaitu hanya melibatkan 2.24 peratus kenaikan harga pasaran bagi minuman bergula berbanding 8.83 peratus jangkakan awal.

"Apa yang lebih menarik ialah impak berikutan pengenaan cukai ini menunjukkan pengurangan pengambilan minuman bergula dalam kalangan remaja iaitu daripada 36.9 peratus kepada 16.4 peratus.

"Golongan muda dan berpendapatan rendah B40 me-

rupakan pengguna tertinggi dan paling banyak berbelanja untuk minuman manis telah menerima impak positif daripada pelaksanaan cukai ini," katanya.

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, hasil dapatan Tinjauan Kesihatan dan Morbiditi Kebangsaan 2022: Tinjauan Kesihatan Remaja menunjukkan penurunan prevalen pengambilan minuman berkarbonat sekurang-kurangnya sekali sehari iaitu daripada 36.9 peratus pada 2019 kepada 32.4 peratus pada 2022.

Beliau berkata, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) menjangkakan impak lebih positif dan signifikan akan diperolehi khususnya dalam pengurangan pengambilan minuman bergula dalam kalangan masyarakat dengan pengenaan cukai kepada 90 sen per liter seperti yang diumumkan oleh kerajaan. - Bernama

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 3
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

Health insurance hike could trigger inflation spike: MEF

■ BY JOSHUA PURUSHOTMAN
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PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) has warned that a significant increase in health insurance premiums could compel businesses to raise the prices of their products and services.

Its president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman said such price adjustments would erode the competitive edge of micro, small and medium enterprises, drive customers away and reduce their market share.

"Businesses will be forced to pass on the increased costs to consumers, contributing to broader economic inflation. This will affect general price levels within the economy and decrease consumers' purchasing power," he said.

Syed Hussain was commenting on recent media reports of insurance providers seeking to increase premiums by 40% to 78%.

He said to mitigate these costs, some employers may reduce health insurance coverage levels, resulting in less comprehensive benefits for employees.

He urged Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) and the government to urgently address issues related to the proposed premium increases.

Syed Hussain said many employers already provide resources

➤ 'Businesses may raise prices or cut coverage, affecting competitiveness and employee benefits'

and support systems to enhance employee well-being as part of a strategic approach to improving overall health.

Based on the MEF Survey on Flexible Working Arrangement: Assessing Practices and Perspectives of Private Sector Employers in Malaysia (2024), the most widely offered resource, by 46.6% of respondent companies, includes educational workshops, seminars or webinars on stress management.

Flexible working arrangements are provided by 44.5% of companies to give employees greater control over their schedules and improve work-life balance.

Additionally, 30.9% of companies offer an Employee Assistance Programme, which provides confidential support for personal and work-related challenges.

"A total of 26.7% of companies also provide management training to identify signs of stress or mental health concerns, enabling supervisors to proactively support employee well-being.

"With all of these initiatives, which cost significant amounts, employers cannot afford to absorb the cost of higher insurance premiums as well," he said.

Comprehensive health insurance plans that include mental health coverage are available in 19.4% of companies, while 18.3% provide therapy sessions with licensed therapists or psychologists, offering professional support either on-site or off-site.

Syed Hussain added that 39.5% of companies have analysed employee health insurance claims to customise health programmes and insurance plans to address prevalent health trends and risks.

"This targeted strategy enhances employee well-being and helps control insurance costs by addressing specific health issues proactively," he said.

MEF supports the launch of the Rakan KKM programme, which allows patients to access additional health facilities at minimal costs through a collaboration between

government-linked investment companies and the Health Ministry.

Syed Hussain also commended the government's revisions to Schedule 13 of the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act, particularly regarding consultant fees, and lauded BNM's directive for insurance and *takaful* operators to reassess their pricing strategies for medical and health insurance products.

"In 2019, household health expenditure in Malaysia accounted for about 34% in out-of-pocket payments, higher than Singapore (30.1%) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries (13.9%).

"This reflects the demand for private healthcare, as the public health sector is heavily congested, motivating the drive for private healthcare insurance ownership," he said.

Despite this demand, private health insurance coverage in Malaysia remains low, with data from the National Health and Morbidity Survey 2019 indicating that only 14.3% of Malaysians have private health insurance.

"Higher insurance premium costs will force some existing policyholders to review their policies, and some may even drop out as they can no longer afford the higher premiums."

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN : NEGARA

Pembantu perawatan didakwa 'jual diri' melalui WeChat

KOTA BHARU – Seorang pembantu perawatan di sebuah klinik didakwa di Mahkamah Majistret di sini semalam, atas pertuduhan menawarkan khidmat seks kepada seorang lelaki melalui aplikasi WeChat pada Julai lalu.

Bagaimanapun, tertuduh, Tasnim Amirah Abdullah, 27, mengaku tidak bersalah selepas pertuduhan terhadapnya dibacakan di hadapan Majistret Ahmad Syaifq Aizat Nazri.

Mengikut pertuduhan, tertuduh yang masih bujang didakwa menawarkan khidmat seks melalui aplikasi WeChat kepada seorang lelaki di sebuah bilik hotel

di Tunjong di sini kira-kira pukul 6 petang pada 8 Julai lalu.

Wanita itu didakwa mengikut Seksyen 372B Kanun Keseksaan iaitu mencari atau mendesak bagi maksud persundalan atau mana-mana maksud perbuatan lucah.

Seksyen tersebut memperuntukkan hukuman penjara sehingga setahun atau denda atau kedua-duanya jika sabit kesalahan.

Pendakwaan dikendalikan oleh Timbalan Pendakwa Raya, Nurul Akmal Mohamad Bakri, manakala tertuduh diwakili peguam Yayasan Bantuan Guaman Kebangsaan (YBKG), Ariyani

Mohd. Amin @ Abdul Hamid.

Terdahulu, Nurul Akmal tidak menawarkan sebarang jaminan atas pertuduhan yang dihadapi tertuduh.

Ariyani dalam rayuannya memohon Tasnim Amirah diberikan jaminan memandangkan tertuduh turut menjaga seorang abang yang juga orang kelainan upaya (OKU).

Mahkamah membenarkan ikat jamin RM4,000 dengan seorang penjamin selain menetapkan 4 Februari tahun depan untuk sebutan semula kes. Tertuduh telah membayar jaminan yang ditetapkan mahkamah.



TASNIM AMIRAH dibawa keluar dari Mahkamah Majistret Kota Bharu semalam.