

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN  
MUKA SURAT : 5  
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

# Peratusan remaja merokok menurun

**Kerajaan komited kawal secara menyeluruh semua jenis produk rokok**

Oleh Suzalina Halid  
suzalina@bh.com.my

**Kuala Lumpur:** Peratusan remaja berusia 13 hingga 17 tahun yang menggunakan rokok konvensional menurun kepada 6.2 peratus pada 2022 berbanding 13.8 peratus pada 2017.

Dapatan itu diperoleh berdasarkan Tinjauan Kesihatan dan Morbiditi Kebangsaan (NHMS). Menurut Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM), pihaknya komited untuk merealisasikan matlamat

negara bebas daripada sebarang bentuk amalan merokok pada tahun 2040.

Katanya, usaha bagi mencapai hasrat itu antaranya dibuat melalui Akta Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2024 (Akta 852) yang diwartakan pada 2 Februari lalu untuk mengawal secara menyeluruh terhadap semua jenis produk merokok termasuk rokok elektronik atau vape.

"Berdasarkan Akta 852 ini, KKM akan memperketat larangan penjualan, pembelian dan penggunaan semua jenis produk merokok kepada Orang Belum Dewasa (OBD) yang berusia kurang 18 tahun.

"KKM juga akan terus menjalankan program advokasi pencegahan merokok bersama pelbagai Kementerian, agensi, badan bukan kerajaan dan badan

profesional," katanya menerusi kenyataan, kelmarin.

Sambutan Hari Tanpa Tembakau diraikan di seluruh dunia pada 31 Mei setiap tahun.

Tema sambutan tahun ini adalah 'Lindungi Kanak-kanak daripada Pengaruh Industri Tembakau' yang bertujuan mengesakan semua individu dan lapisan masyarakat untuk membantaras pengaruh industri tembakau terhadap kanak-kanak.

## Punca penyakit NCD

Tema itu selari dengan objektif peruntukan yang digariskan di bawah Artikel 5.3 Perjanjian World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) yang mana Malaysia menjadi anggota parti sejak 2005.

Pada masa sama, menurut KKM, merokok produk temba-



KKM terus komited merealisasikan matlamat negara bebas daripada amalan merokok pada 2040.

(Foto hiasan)

ka antara faktor utama yang menyebabkan komplikasi penyakit kronik tidak berjangkit (NCD) seperti jantung koronari, kanser dan paru-paru kronik.

Katanya, pelbagai faktor mempengaruhi penggunaan, terutama dalam kalangan kanak-kanak dan remaja yang berpotensi terjerumus menjadi perokok kekal sepanjang hayat.

"Antara faktornya ialah bentuk produk merokok yang menarik seperti bentuk permainan; perisa yang pelbagai; pro-

mosi berleluasa dan tanpa kawal di media sosial; serta expo dan pameran produk merokok.

"Semoga sambutan Hari Tanpa Tembakau Sedunia 2024 akan meningkatkan lagi pemahaman dan komitmen masyarakat terhadap kepentingan pencegahan amalan merokok dan seterusnya melindungi seluruh lapisan masyarakat terutama golongan kanak-kanak daripada pengaruh industri tembakau dan produk merokok," katanya.

# Malaysia bentuk IHR kebangsaan tahun ini

**Kuala Lumpur:** Malaysia akan membentuk Lembaga Peraturan-Peraturan Kesihatan Antarabangsa (IHR) kebangsaan tahun ini, susulan persetujuan semakan terhadap IHR (2005) pada peringkat antarabangsa.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, berkata persetujuan semakan itu dicapai pada Perhimpunan Kesihatan Sedunia ke-77 (WHR77) di Geneva, Switzerland minggu lalu, dengan sokongan 194 negara anggota meminda IHR (2005).

"Kita akan mengguna pakai pendekatan keseluruhan kerajaan atau *whole-of-government* dan membabitkan pemegang taruh, maknanya ia bukan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) semata-mata.

"Jawatankuasa ini boleh dibentuk dalam tempoh enam bulan tapi saya mahu ia dilakukan segera," katanya kepada pemberita selepas Karnival World No Tobacco Day (WNTD SEGARUN) sempena Hari Tanpa Tembakau Sedunia 2024 di sini, semalam.

Selain pembentukan Lembaga IHR Kebangsaan, beliau berkata, negara anggota bersetuju mematuhi prinsip solidariti dan kesaksamaan sejajar pindaan terhadap IHR yang antara lain merangkumi komitmen memperkuatkan akses kepada produk kesihatan dan pembiayaan.

Katanya, aspek lain membabitkan takrifan pandemik dan penubuhan jawatankuasa peringkat negara anggota bagi membantu pelaksanaan pindaan IHR. Penubuhan Jawatankuasa IHR



Dr Dzulkefly bersama peserta larian WNTD SEGARUN sempena Hari Tanpa Tembakau Sedunia 2024 di Dataran Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur, semalam.

(Foto Aswadi Alias/BH)

Kebangsaan negara anggota bertumpu kepada usaha memantapkan penyelarasan pelaksanaan peraturan.

Sementara itu, laman web Perubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) menyatakan, takrifan darurat pandemik merujuk kepada tahap kecemasan lebih tinggi mengikut mekanisme IHR sedia ada.

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, semakan IHR memberi penekanan kepada persediaan negara ketika berdepan darurat kesihatan.

"Kita sudah mempunyai forumnya, semakan ini lebih kepada penambahbaikan. Kita memiliki peralatan diperlukan, maka kini kita mahu memperkuatkannya," katanya.

## Akta 852 akan dikuatkuasa

Sementara itu, Dr Dzulkefly berkata, Akta Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2023 (Akta 852) akan dikuatkuasakan bermula tahun ini.

Beliau berkata, Rang Undang-Undang (RUU) antimerokok

yang diluluskan di Dewan Negara pada Disember 2023 sudah diwartakan Februari lalu.

"Ia akan dikuatkuasakan sebaik peraturan dan perintah berkaitan (akta) diwartakan. Kita jangka undang-undang ini dilaksanakan tahun ini," katanya.

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, usaha melawan tabiat merokok memerlukan pendekatan menyeluruh kerajaan dan masyarakat dengan penyertaan semua pihak termasuk pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO), guru, peruncit, ahli po-

litik, badan penguatkuasaan serta rakyat.

"Kita mesti bersatu padu dalam membendung budaya merokok dan vape. Justeru, bagi yang tidak merokok, jangan mulakan. Bagi yang merokok pula, dapatkan perkhidmatan di fasiliti KKM dan sebagainya bagi menghentikan tabiat berkenaan," katanya.

Beliau berkata, akta itu akan menyaksikan kawalan lebih ketat terhadap penjualan produk vape ke atas kanak-kanak bawah umur.



AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA  
MUKA SURAT : 1  
RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN

Perubatan bukan pilihan lepasan SPM, bakal cetus krisis kesihatan

# Ramai yang layak tapi tidak minat

Oleh **MAISARAH SHEIKH RAHIM**  
maisarah.rahim@mediamulla.com.my

**PUTRAJAYA:** Berdasarkan keputusan Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) 2023, seramai 21,157 lepasan layak menyambung pengajian dalam bidang perubatan, sekali gus boleh menga-

tasi masalah kekurangan doktor yang dihadapi negara ketika ini.

Namun, golongan tersebut didakwa tidak berminat untuk meneruskan pengajian dalam jurusan itu mungkin disebabkan kos yang tinggi dan bimbang sukar tamatkan pengajian.

Mengikut laporan Analisis

Keputusan Peperiksaan SPM 2023, kira-kira 23 peratus pelajar yang mendapat keputusan cemerlang untuk semua subjek atau sekurang-kurangnya satu subjek Elektif STEM iaitu Sains Tulin dan Matematik Tambahan berpotensi mengambil jurusan tersebut.

Subjek Elektif STEM merupakan antara syarat kelayakan utama yang wajib lulus sekurang-kurangnya gred B untuk melanjutkan pengajian dalam jurusan perubatan di institut pengajian tinggi.

**Bersambung di muka 2**

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA  
MUKA SURAT : 2  
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

## Ramai yang layak tapi tidak minat

Dari muka 1

Seramai 109,921 pelajar menduduki subjek Matematik Tambahan, Fizik (90,778 orang); Kimia (91,674 orang) dan Biologi (71,604 orang).

Mereka yang gagal pula ialah sekitar lapan peratus dengan tertinggi meliputi Matematik Tambahan iaitu 25.9 peratus gagal atau 28,469 orang; Fizik (544 orang gagal); Kimia (3,300 orang gagal) dan Biologi (644 orang gagal).

Ini bermakna sekitar 32,957 orang gagal untuk kesemua subjek itu atau sekurang-kurangnya gagal dalam satu daripada subjek berkenaan sekali gus tidak melayakkan mereka untuk mengambil jurusan perubatan.

Kuota yang dibenarkan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) adalah seramai 4,820 orang setahun, namun jumlah siswazah sebenar adalah lebih rendah iaitu kira-kira 4,000 orang setahun.

Mengikut rekod Kementerian Pendidikan Tinggi (KPT), siswazah perubatan dalam negara pada 2020 adalah seramai 2,401 orang, 2021 (3,132) manakala bagi 2022 (3,934 orang). Antara faktor jumlah siswazah yang rendah adalah kegagalan menamatkan pengajian, menukar jurusan dan lain-lain faktor.

Anggaran siswazah perubatan tempatan bagi tiga tahun akan datang adalah kira-kira 3,934 orang setahun iaitu 2,281 daripada IPT awam dan 1,653 daripada IPT swasta.

Dalam hal ini, ia bermakna bukanlah isu tempat terhad yang boleh ditawarkan kepada pelajar berkenaan, namun timbul persoalan berhubung ketiadaan minat pelajar untuk melanjutkan pengajian dalam bidang perubatan, apatah lagi kos tinggi.

Kursus perubatan juga adalah satu daripada satu kursus paling mahal dan paling lama untuk diselesaikan dengan kos bela-



**SERAMAI 21,157 lepasan SPM 2023 memperoleh keputusan cemerlang yang membolehkan mereka menyambung pengajian dalam bidang perubatan. - UTUSAN/FAISOL MUSTAFA**

jar perubatan berjumlah antara RM250,000 hingga RM650,000 bergantung kepada universiti dan mengambil masa sekitar lima tahun untuk dihabiskan.

Setelah menamatkan pengajian, graduan perubatan dikehendaki menjalani latihan klinikal (HO) dalam sistem penjagaan kesihatan awam. Di peringkat ini, pelajar perubatan paling cemerlang pun tercicir kerana tuntutan kerja.

Mengulas mengenai isu ini, Presiden Kongres Persatuan Akademik Malaysia (MAAC), Prof. Dr. Ahmad Ismail berkata, pengetahuan pelajar tentang kerjaya bidang STEM masih rendah tidak hanya dalam bidang perubatan dan kejuruteraan.

Katanya, negara masih kekurangan calon dalam bidang itu, misalnya pada tahun 2018, Malaysia menjangkakan seramai 500,000 ahli sains dan jurutera diperlukan pada tahun 2020, namun angka itu belum lagi tercapai.

"Kita masih kekurangan untuk memenuhi kehendak industri sebuah negara maju. Apabila bercakap tentang STIE (sains, teknologi, inovasi dan ekonomi), Malaysia memerlukan graduan dalam bidang STEM.

"Persediaan sumber manusia bidang STEM penting untuk menghadapi IR 4.0 (revolusi industri 4.0) dan AI (kecerdasan buatan)," katanya.

Ahmad menambah, berdasarkan keputusan SPM 2023, pencapaian subjek Sains Tulen dan Matematik Tambahan masih rendah dibandingkan dengan keperluan pencapaian sepatutnya, walaupun ada yang menunjukkan peningkatan.

Ini belum termasuk pelajar yang gagal dalam subjek teras iaitu Sains dan Matematik dengan seramai 25,174 gagal subjek Sains dan 85,706 gagal subjek Matematik.

Katanya, prestasi setiap subjek mesti menunjukkan pengetahuan sebenar peringkat SPM sebagai asas kepada bidang yang akan diceburi di universiti, walaupun mereka masih ada masa untuk meningkatkan pengetahuan asas di peringkat matrikulasi, Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM) atau diploma.

"Semua pelajar lepasan SPM mesti membuat pilihan dengan teliti program di universiti bergantung kepada, minat, pencapaian akademik dan haluan kerjaya," katanya.



AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES  
MUKA SURAT : 1  
RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN

## Law curbing smoking by minors to be enforced this year

THE legislation, which was the subject of a long and intense debate, prohibits the sale of tobacco and vape products to minors. The health minister says action will be taken once regulations under the act are approved.

» REPORT BY  
NURADZIMMAH DAIM  
ON PAGE 2



AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES  
MUKA SURAT : 2  
RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION

UNITED IN FIGHTING SMOKING

# ANTI-SMOKING LAW TO BE ENFORCED THIS YEAR

Long and arduous process for bill to be approved by Parliament

NURADZIMMAH DAIM  
KUALA LUMPUR  
news@nst.com.my

**T**HE Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024 will be enforced this year.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the bill was gazetted in February.

"It will be enforced once related regulations under the act are approved. We expect to start implementing the law this year," he said at the World No Tobacco Day Segarun event yesterday.

The act includes provisions prohibiting the sale and purchase of tobacco products, smoking materials or tobacco substitute products, as well as providing smoking products to minors.

After a long and arduous process, the bill was approved by the Dewan Rakyat on Nov 30 and the Dewan Negara on Dec 13.

It saw the removal of provisions related to the Generational End Game, which prohibits the sale of tobacco products and cigarettes and smoking for those born on or after Jan 1, 2007.

It was dropped after the Attorney General's Chambers suggested it might violate the Constitution by creating different rules for different age groups.

First mooted in 2022, the 2023 version of the bill incorporates amendments suggested from the Parliamentary Special Committee last year, including a reduction in the maximum fine for minors from RM5,000 to RM500 and the inclusion of a provision for community service.

Dr Dzulkefly said the war on smoking required a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, including non-governmental organisations, teachers, retailers, politicians, enforcement bodies and the public.

"We must be united in curbing smoking and vaping."

"For those who don't smoke, don't start. For smokers, seek help to kick the habit at health clinics."

He said the act would see more stringent control on the sale of



Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (second from right) participating in a run at the World No Tobacco Day Segarun event in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY ASWADI ALJAS

vape products to children.

He said 26 notices were issued for the selling of vape products to children last year and two notices were issued this year.

Factors leading children and teenagers to start vaping include attractive devices and strong promotion of the products on social media as the newly gazetted act had yet to kick in, he said.

On World No Tobacco Day, he said the theme of "Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference" was aimed at raising awareness at all levels of society about the risks of smoking and the influence of the tobacco industry on children and teens.

He said this was in line with Article 5.3 of the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

He said the National Health and Morbidity Survey showed that the percentage of teenagers aged 13 to 17 who smoke cigarettes decreased from 13.8 per cent in 2017 to 6.2 per cent in 2022.

"Unfortunately, vaping or use of e-cigarettes has increased from 9.8 per cent in 2017 to 14.9 per cent in 2022. This is a wake-up call."

"The Health Ministry will carry out enforcement to curb the exposure of vaping to children."

On another matter, he said a National Health Regulations Authority would be set up this year to boost preparedness for health emergencies.

This is a result of revisions to the International Health Regulations, which require World Health Organisation (WHO) members to establish a national authority.

The International Health Regulations are an instrument of international law that is legally binding for 196 countries, according to the WHO website.

Consumers Association of Penang senior consumer and en-

vironmental education officer N. V. Subbarow said more stringent measures to deter smoking and regulating vape products were crucial to protect children and the public.

"The focus should be on protecting non-smokers, especially those who are forced to inhale smoke in public places."

"The authorities should consider installing CCTVs (closed-circuit television cameras) in no-smoking zones."

He said advertisements for vape products must be regulated, including prohibiting them in public places and regulation of online promotion.

"Gone are the days of 'gaya, mutu, keunggulan'," he said, referring to a tagline for a tobacco brand used in TV commercials.

"Now, we can easily see vape products promoted online. Sometimes, vape products are displayed at cashier counters in eateries."

Compared with cigarettes, vaping appealed more to children due to the availability of fruity and pleasant flavours, driving them to pick up the habit, he said.

Malaysian Council for Tobacco Control president Dr Muralitharan Munisamy urged the government to expedite the drawing up of regulations for the new act.

"Without regulations, the act has no teeth as regulators, including the MCMC (Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission), do not have the power to take action against the online sale, promotion and marketing of vape products."

"Once there are regulations, then we can talk about awareness programmes, advocacy and community policy."

He said though it required a lot of effort, he believed Malaysia could become a smoke-free nation with the existing legal framework.



AKHBAR : THE STAR  
MUKA SURAT : 14  
RUANGAN : NATION

# 'Time for annual Covid-19 jabs'

## Prioritise safety of vulnerable groups amid new reality, say health experts

By RAGANANTHINI VETHASALAM  
raga@thestar.com.my

**PETALING JAYA:** As Singapore grapples with a surge in Covid-19 cases in recent weeks and vulnerable groups there are advised to take additional jabs, health experts say Malaysia should also take the same measures.

They said another dose of the Covid-19 vaccine is needed to boost immunity after the waning effects of the previous shot as the vaccines offer protection for only up to six months.

Universiti Putra Malaysia Public Health Medicine expert Prof Dr Malina Osman said such boosters are generally recommended for vulnerable groups.

"In general, it is recommended for those who are vulnerable to get the booster, but I am not sure whether the stock of Covid-19 vaccines currently available in the country is effective against the current strain," she said.

Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh, a health economics and public health specialist

with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Faculty of Medicine, said Malaysia could potentially see a spike in new Covid-19 cases following rising caseloads in both Singapore and Australia.

She proposed that Covid-19 shots be taken annually like flu shots, adding that booster shots will offer better protection

against the mutating virus.

These booster shots, she said, should be based on the current strain that is circulating.

Public health expert and former Health Ministry official Datuk Zainal Ariffin Omar said Covid-19 has evolved, adding that it is similar to other respiratory diseases such as influenza.

He said people should observe the basic precautionary measures and seek treatment if needed.

Zainal Ariffin also encouraged vulnerable groups to take additional shots if they are available.

He noted that many cases may go unreported as Covid-19 is now seen as just another flu-like illness.

Checks on MySejahtera showed that only the Sinovac vaccine is being offered, although there are no vaccination centres available.

As of June 2, there were 9,398 active Covid-19 cases with 142 hospitalisations.

No deaths were reported and only one patient was ventilated.

On May 19, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the ministry was closely monitoring the situation in Singapore as the caseload in the republic had doubled.

The caseload reached 25,900 in the week between May 5 and May 11, up from 13,700 the previous week. A total of 280 hospitalisations were reported.

About two-thirds of the infections in the current wave were driven by the KP.1 and KP.2 subvariants.

Singapore's Health Ministry has called on vulnerable groups, including senior citizens, to get an additional Covid-19 jab.

Mobile vaccination teams will also be deployed across Singapore from now until June 28. This will make it convenient for vulnerable seniors to get their vaccinations.

The ministry has also made the Novavax Covid-19 jab, which is an updated form of the vaccine, available under its national vaccination programme.

The World Health Organisation has classified KP.2 as a variant under monitoring.

# 'No smoking for minors' law to kick in this year

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The law prohibiting the sale and purchase of tobacco products, smoking items or tobacco substitutes to those under 18 years old will come into force this year.

It comes under the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024 (Act 852), which Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said will be enforced starting this year.

Under the Act, which was gazetted on Feb 2, the provision of any services related to smoking to minors under 18 will also be banned.

Dzulkefly said it is of great concern that recent findings on cigarette smoking showed that although its prevalence among children aged 13 to 17 had decreased, vaping recorded an uptick.

"This is a wake-up call. The regulations (of the Act) will be enforced to curb this," he told reporters at the World No Tobacco Day Carnival here yesterday.

The recent National Health and Morbidity Survey reported that the rate of cigarette use among adolescents aged 13 to 17 dropped from 13.8% in 2017 to 6.2% in 2022. For e-cigarette or vape use, however, it increased from 9.8% in 2017 to 14.9% in 2022.



**Stop the puff:** Women holding placards during the World No Tobacco Day Carnival in Kuala Lumpur. — YAP CHEE HONG/The Star

Dzulkefly said various actions will be taken through the enforcement of Act 852 led by his ministry to curb smoking of cigarettes and vapes among Malaysians, especially adolescents.

The war on smoking requires a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach, he added.

"This includes non-governmental organisations, teachers, retailers, politicians and enforcement bodies, as well as Malaysians in general. We must be united in curbing the smoking and vaping culture," he added.

Separately, Dzulkefly said a National International Health Regulations Authority will be set up this year to enhance prepared-

ness for health emergencies.

The minister said this is following the revisions to the International Health Regulations (IHR), which require World Health Organisation (WHO) members to create a national IHR authority.

"A national-level IHR will be set up to help in coordination in the country. The authority is also a whole-of-government approach, not just on the Health Ministry," he said.

Asked about the timeline for its formation, he said it will be within six months.

"If possible, I want to set it up immediately," he added.

Dzulkefly said 194 member states of the WHO agreed to the amendments at the 77th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

According to the WHO, the IHR is an instrument of international law that is legally binding on 196 countries.

Other new amendments to the IHR include introducing a definition of a pandemic emergency; a commitment to solidarity and equity on strengthening access to medical products and financing; as well as the establishment of the States Parties Committee to facilitate effective implementation of the amended regulations.