

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 1

RUANGAN : -

RUU Kawalan Produk Tembakau dan Merokok 2022

Rujuk kepada Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas Parlimen

- Ahli Parlimen setuju sebulat suara Rang Undang-Undang dirujuk kepada Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas Parlimen.

- Menteri Kesihatan akan buat pindaan usul selari dengan syor penambahbaikan, bentang semula dan dibahaskan pada sidang akan datang.

- Pembentangan semula dibuat sama ada pada sidang khas atau Mesyuarat Ketiga Penggal Kelima, Parlimen Ke-14 akan datang bermula 26 Oktober.

Oleh Mohd Nasaruddin Parzi, Muhamad Yusri Muzamir dan Mahani Ishak → Nasional 8



AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

RUU Kawalan Produk Tembakau dan Merokok 2022

Rujuk JPK Parlimen untuk syor penambahbaikan

Usul rujuk ke jawatankuasa hendaklah diputus dengan tak boleh dipinda atau dibahas

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(dan) Wuthanadi Wansil/Wuthanadi
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Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Rakyat semalam, bersetuju Rang Undang-Undang (RUU) Kawalan Produk Tembakau dan Merokok 2022 dirujuk ke Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas (JPK) Parlimen untuk diteliti serta membuat syor penambahbaikan.

Usul RUU berkenaan yang kini masih pada peringkat bacaan kali kedua, dipersetujui sebulat suara oleh Ahli Parlimen untuk dirujuk ke jawatankuasa berkenaan selepas ia dibahas 12 Ahli Parlimen, seterusnya digulung oleh Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin.

Yang Dipertua Dewan Rakyat, Tan Sri Azhar Azizan Harun dalam keputusannya mengenai RUU berkenaan berkata, mengikut peraturan mesyuarat 54(2) Peraturan Mesyuarat, usul untuk merujuk RUU ke jawatankuasa berkenaan hendaklah diputuskan dengan tidak boleh dipinda atau dibahas.

"Masalahnya ialah usul seperti dikemukakan tadi hendaklah disetujui. Ahli (Dewan Rakyat) yang bersetuju sila kata setuju, yang tidak kata tidak."

Maka sebulat suara usul disetujui," katanya.

Khairy ketika mengemukakan usul merujuk RUU berkenaan ke Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas itu

berkata, ia membabitkan penelitian 'Bahagian IX - Penguatkuasaan' dalam RUU dan akan mencadangkan apa-apa penambahbaikan jika perlu, tertakluk kepada undang-undang yang berkuat kuasa.

"Meneliti fasal berhubung dengan penalti bagi kesalahan dalam RUU dan mencadangkan apa-apa penambahbaikan sekiranya perlu."

"Meneliti cadangan penambahbaikan dibangkitkan Ahli Dewan Rakyat dalam perbahasan peringkat dasar RUU serta syor dikemukakan Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas Kesihatan, Sains dan Inovasi serta Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas Hal Ehwal Wanita dan Kanak-Kanak dan Pembangunan Sosial berhubung RUU."

Kawal selia produk tembakau

"Menyediakan suatu senarai mengandungi cadangan penambahbaikan RUU bagi tujuan kawal selia produk tembakau, bahan merokok, produk pengganti tembakau atau peranti merokok dalam tempoh sebulan."

"Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas boleh melanjutkan tempoh ini jika perlu tetapi hendaklah tidak melebihi tarikh hari pertama persidangan Mesyuarat Ketiga, Penggal Kelima, Parlimen Ke-14 akan datang," katanya.

Khairy berkata, jawatankuasa itu akan dipengerusikan beliau, selain dianggotai 12 Ahli Parlimen daripada blok kerajaan dan pembangkang.

Bagi tujuan itu, katanya, Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas boleh menjemput mana-mana pihak seperti Ahli Parlimen, pakar pe-

rundangan dan perlembagaan, pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO) dan Masyarakat Madani serta individu lain untuk hadir dalam persidangan dari semasa ke semasa.

Jawatankuasa itu dianggotai Ahli Parlimen Baling, Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim; Datuk Mohd Nizar Zakaria (Parit); Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said (Pengerang); Datuk Mas Ermeyati Samsudin (Masjid Tanah) dan Ahmad Fadhli Shaari (Pasir Mas).

Ia turut dianggotai Ahli Parlimen Sibuti, Lukanisman Awang Sauni; Dr Kelvin Yip Lee Wuen (Bandar Kuching); Sivarasa (Sungai Buloh); Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (Kuala Selangor); Datuk Seri Madius Tugau (Tuaran); Datuk Ignatius Dorell Leiking (Penampang) dan Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir (Jerlun).

Terdahulu, Khairy ketika mengulung perbahasan RUU berkata, pihaknya menjangkakan perbahasan dan penerimaan RUU itu berbeza dalam kalangan Ahli Parlimen kerana tidak mempunyai duaan (precedent) sama ada di Malaysia atau luar negara.

"Ini disebabkan RUU ini bukanlah RUU biasa atau ada rujukan sama ada dalam sejarah Malaysia mahupun negara luar."

Ini adalah RUU yang baik kata Copeng (Dr Lee Boon Chai) sebagai 'mengubah permainan'.

"Matlamatnya adalah untuk membawa penamatan merokok dan menghisap rokok kerana mudarat rokok adalah ke atas diri sendiri dan individu berhampirannya."

"Kalau kita tengok kedua-dua

blok ada yang setuju dan sebaliknya. Kalau kita 'enforce', mungkin akan ada yang setuju atau membangkang dengan paksaan. Justeru, lebih baik apabila 'rumah ini siap dan pahat tidak berbunyi', biarlah 'rumah ini siap dengan sempurna atau sesempurna mungkin'," katanya.

Mengenai aspek kebebasan memilih dibahaskan beberapa Ahli Parlimen, Khairy bagaimanapun menjelaskan, setiap individu di negara ini juga tidak mempunyai hak asasi untuk mencederakan diri, orang lain atau memudaratkan kemaslahatan awam.

"Saya dengar Padang Rengas (Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Aziz) menyatakan RUU ini mencabul hak, seperti termaktub dalam Perkara 5(1) Perlembagaan Persekutuan tetapi ingin dinyatakan tiada manusia di Malaysia yang ada hak asasi untuk mencederakan diri."

"Saya tak tahu kalau ada Ahli Parlimen yang boleh berdiri untuk menyatakan tiada bukti mengaitkan merokok dengan kanser. Saya boleh rujuk pelbagai bukti saintifik. Tidak ada hak asasi untuk mencederakan diri," katanya.

Rabu lalu, Khairy membenarkan RUU itu yang antara lain memperuntukkan larangan kepada Generasi Penamat (GEG) atau individu yang lahir pada 2007 dan seterusnya, merokok, membeli atau memiliki produk tembakau atau peranti merokok untuk bacaan kali pertama di Dewan Rakyat.

Beliau berkata, persetujuan untuk meluluskan RUU itu amat penting supaya penjualan produk rokok terutama vape dapat dikawal selia di bawah akta tersendiri memandangkan tiada mekanisme perundangan untuk mengawal selia produk rokok alaf baharu itu ketika ini.



Azhar Azizan Harun

RUU dibentangkan, dibahas semula

Kuala Lumpur: Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas (JPK) akan menggunakan tempoh sebulan bermula sekarang untuk menambak baik Rang Undang-Undang (RUU) Kawalan Produk Tembakau dan Merokok 2022 dan membuat pindaan berkaitan.

Menteri di Jabatan Perdana Menteri (Parlimen dan Undang-Undang), Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar, berkata selepas tempoh itu,

JPK akan membentangkan laporan penambahbaikan RUU berkenaan pada sidang Dewan Rakyat akan datang.

"Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin akan mempergunakan JPK dan merangka RUU baharu atau membuat pindaan kepada



Wan Junaidi

RUU yang dibentangkan di Dewan Rakyat semalam untuk dibahaskan semula.

"Ini sudah ok, Ahli Parlimen setuju sebulat suara dan RUU terbabit dirujuk kepada JPK," katanya kepada BH, semalam. Wan Junaidi ber-

kata, pembentangan semula dibuat sama ada pada sidang khas atau Mesyuarat Ketiga Penggal Kelima, Parlimen Ke-14 akan datang bermula 26 Oktober.

"RUU itu akan dibentangkan pada sesi persidangan akan datang, melainkan jika Khairy meminta Perdana Menteri (Ketua Majlis Mesyuarat) mengadakan satu sesi khas," katanya.

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 14

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Wabak cacar monyet

Malaysia, negara jiran kongsi maklumat kes

Langkah pencegahan, kawalan elak penularan jadi keutamaan

Oleh Irwan Shafrihan Ismail
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Kuala Lumpur: Perkongsian maklumat pergerakan kes antara langkah diambil Malaysia bersama negara jiran dalam menjalankan aktiviti pencegahan dan kawalan cacar monyet.

Biar pun belum ada kes dilaporkan di negara ini, langkah pencegahan dan kawalan menjadi keutamaan selepas kebimbangan peningkatan kes di Singapura dan Thailand, selain kes turut mula dikesan di Filipina.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata perkongsian maklumat pergerakan kes yang disahkan cacar monyet ke dalam Malaysia dikongsikan kepada Ke-

menterian Kesihatan (KKM) melalui *National Focal Point for International Health Regulations* (IHR 2005) negara masing-masing.

"Ia bertujuan supaya siasatan kes dan pengesanan kontak rapat serta langkah pencegahan dan kawalan dapat dijalankan segera," katanya kepada BH.

Negara terus siap siaga

Beliau mengulas kesiapsiagaan negara dalam menghadapi ancaman cacar monyet susulan peningkatan kes di negara jiran, Singapura dan Thailand.

Setakat Selasa lalu, Singapura dilaporkan mencatat sembilan kes cacar monyet, manakala kerajaan Thailand sudah mengeluarkan amaran cacar monyet peringkat kebangsaan selepas negara itu mencatat dua kes.

Filipina turut mengesahkan kes pertama cacar monyet pada seseorang yang mempunyai sejarah perjalanan ke luar negara.

India turut mengesahkan kes kematian pertama akibat cacar monyet di Asia semalam membabitkan seorang lelaki muda di negeri selatan Kerala, kematian keempat yang diketahui disebab-

kan jangkitan wabak yang sedang menular itu.

Dr Noor Hisham berkata, Malaysia juga memperkukuhkan pengesanan kes di pintu masuk antarabangsa (PMA) negara melalui kerjasama dengan pegawai Jabatan Imigresen dan agensi berkepentingan di PMA.

Tingkat kesedaran

"Maklumat berkaitan cacar monyet dipaparkan dan dihebahkan di PMA bagi meningkatkan kesedaran pengembara mengenai penyakit ini.

"Selain itu, ia juga bagi mengingatkan mereka memantau status kesihatan sendiri selama 21 hari sekiranya mempunyai risiko dijangkiti dan membuat rujukan sendiri sekiranya mengalami gejala cacar monyet," katanya.

Setakat ini, lebih 20,000 orang di 78 negara dijangkiti virus itu, menurut Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO), yang sudah mengisytiharkan wabak cacar monyet sebagai kecemasan kesihatan global.

Malaysia juga memperkukuhkan pengesanan kes di pintu masuk antarabangsa (PMA) negara melalui kerjasama dengan pegawai Jabatan Imigresen dan agensi berkepentingan di PMA



Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah,
Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan

Peru, India catat kematian pertama. Dunia 28

Penularan COVID-19

3,213 kes positif, lapan korban terbaru

Putrajaya: Lapan lagi kematian akibat pandemik COVID-19 dilaporkan kelmarin dengan dua kes meninggal dunia di luar hospital (BID).

Ia menjadikan jumlah kematian akibat penularan wabak itu kini mencecah 35,977 kes dengan 7,644 adalah kes BID sehingga kini.

Berdasarkan portal COVID-NOW Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM), 3,213 kes positif lagi dilaporkan kelmarin, menjadikan jumlah jangkitan keseluruhan sebanyak 4,845,334 kes termasuk 11 kes import.

Sejumlah 3,847 kes sembuh direkodkan dengan jumlah keseluruhan kes sudah pulih membabitkan seramai 4,602,625 pesakit.

54 kes di ICU

Kuala Lumpur mencatatkan jumlah kes harian tertinggi iaitu sebanyak 1,006 diikuti Selangor (865), Sabah (241), Pulau Pinang (171), Perak (224), Negeri Sembilan (153), Kedah (130), Johor



Jumlah kematian akibat penularan pandemik COVID-19 kini mencecah 35,977 kes dengan 7,644 adalah kes meninggal dunia di luar hospital. (Foto hiasan)

(114), Melaka (90) dan Putrajaya (59).

Turut menyumbang kepada jumlah kes harian kelmarin adalah Sarawak (52), Kelantan (42), Pahang (34), Terengganu (23),

Perlis (6) dan tiga kes di Labuan.

Ketika ini, sebanyak 44,664 kes masih aktif membabitkan 43,080 kes dikuarantin di rumah, 20 kes di Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan

COVID-19 (PKRC) serta 1,510 kes di hospital.

Sebanyak 54 kes dirawat di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU), termasuk 33 kes yang memerlukan bantuan pernafasan.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : LOKAL

3,213 KES POSITIF COVID-19

Lapan korban koronavirus

Oleh Samadi Ahmad
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Putrajaya

Penularan Covid-19 tidak boleh dipandang ringan apabila lapan lagi kes kematian akibat virus itu dilaporkan sejak kelmarin dengan dua kes meninggal dunia di luar hospital (BID).

Itu menjadikan jumlah kematian akibat wabak itu mencecah 35,977 kes dengan 7,644 kes BID sehingga kini.

Berdasarkan portal Covidnow, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM), 3,213 kes positif jangkitan Covid-19 dilaporkan kelmarin menjadikan jumlah jangkitan keseluruhan 4,645,334 kes termasuk 11

54

Jumlah pesakit masih dirawat di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU)

44,664

Jumlah kes coronavirus yang masih aktif

kes import.

Sejumlah 3,847 kes sem-buh direkodkan dengan jumlah keseluruhan kes yang sudah pulih mem-babitkan seramai 4,602,625 pesakit.

Kuala Lumpur menca-tatkan jumlah kes harian

tertinggi iaitu 1,006 kes di-ikuti Selangor (865), Sabah (241), Pulau Pinang (171), Perak (224), Negeri Sem-bilan (153), Kedah (130), Jo-hor (114), Melaka (90) dan Putrajaya (59).

Turut menyumbang ke-pada jumlah kes harian kelmarin adalah Sarawak (52), Kelantan (42), Pahang (34), Terengganu (23), Per-lis (enam) dan Labuan (ti-ga).

Ketika ini sebanyak 44,664 kes masih aktif membabitkan 43,080 kes dikuarantin di rumah, 20 kes di Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan Covid-19 (PKRC) dan 1,510 kes di hospital.

Sebanyak 54 kes dirawat di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU) termasuk 33 kes yang me-merlukan bantuan perna-fasan.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 12

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

RUU kawalan produk tembakau dibawa ke Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas

KUALA LUMPUR - Dewan Rakyat pada Selasa bersetuju membawa usul Rang Undang-Undang (RUU) Kawalan Produk Tembakau dan Merokok 2022 untuk dirujuk kepada Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas (JPK) Parlimen bagi penelitian lanjut.

Usul RUU berkenaan yang kini masih berada di peringkat bacaan kali kedua telah dibahaskan selama dua hari oleh 12 ahli Parlimen.

Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar berkata, berikutan usul itu akan dibawa ke jawatankuasa khas, maka tiada pengundian dilakukan pada Selasa.

Khairy dalam ucapan penggulungan sebelum itu, mengakui terdapat pandangan yang berbeza-beza dalam kalangan ahli Parlimen berhubung RUU tersebut.

RUU yang telah dibentang untuk bacaan kali kedua itu antara lain bertujuan menggubal peruntukan generasi penamat (GEG) bagi melindungi golongan muda Malaysia daripada terjebak dengan tabiat merokok.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : NEWS

Smoker digital tracking system poser

Consortium proposes tobacco track and trace plan

CONSUMER

By GANESHWARAN KANA
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PETALING JAYA: Amid claims that the Health Ministry is bulldozing a new anti-tobacco Act, some quarters raised concerns about the likelihood of a digital tracking system that may be introduced as part of the new law.

Sources told *StarBiz* that there are efforts underway by two companies – Green Packet Bhd and Privasia Technology Bhd – to get the Health Ministry's approval for the new system.

The system seeks to complement the "Generational End Game" plan to ban the use, possession and sale of cigarettes and vape products for those born after 2007. It also aims to address the long-standing issue of rampant illicit cigarettes in Malaysia.

A person with information on the matter said the project, if approved, is likely to be awarded on a direct negotiation basis and not open tender.

"This tracking system idea will not be effective in fighting illicit cigarettes and will only add on to the cost that will eventually be passed on to consumers.

"We already have a tax stamp on cigarette boxes for many years. It is also digitally-enabled, but it never managed to address the illicit cigarette issue.

"How will this new idea be any different than the tax stamp?"

Bernama had reported that the Health Ministry is considering several mechanisms for the sale of all types of tobacco products, including the use of QR code.

Following this, during the Dewan Rakyat sitting on Monday, Kuching MP Dr Kelvin Yil Lee Wuen had questioned whether a tracking system would be introduced and what mechanism would be adopted for the system.

"We already have a tax stamp on cigarette boxes for many years. It is also digitally-enabled, but it never managed to address the illicit cigarette issue."

A source

anism would be adopted for the system.

Based on the document sighted by *StarBiz*, a consortium of Green Packet, Privasia and France-based IN Groupe has proposed an end-to-end system called Tobacco Track and Trace (TTT).

Under the TTT system, a security label will be introduced for tobacco products. The label is said to contain "multi-level of security with ultra-thin definition image enabling three levels of authentication."

"There isn't any security label applied on tobacco products.

"It is critical for the Health Ministry to introduce the latest and most advanced holographic technologies from well-established security printer as security labels on top of tobacco products," according to the document presented to the ministry.

Via the TTT system, the consortium noted that tobacco products can be securely distributed from the factory to the final consumers.

"Once the end-to-end TTT system ecosystem is ready, the migration to digital stamps can be done easily.

"Users will have access to a complete history of distribution of the goods.

"The Health Ministry will be able to monitor the complete tobacco products distribution," according to the document.

The TTT project is estimated to take 13 months for a full rollout.

A tobacco company spokesperson said the entire industry is against the introduction of the TTT system.

"Under the Tobacco Product and Smoking Control Bill 2022, section three requires the registration of tobacco products. This will apply for importers, manufacturers and distributors of tobacco products.

"We suspect the government will use this requirement to introduce the TTT system.

"Under the existing act, a registration is not required for tobacco products," he said.

Meanwhile, a source said that the existing tax stamp on cigarettes can also be scanned electronically to identify whether the tobacco product is duty-paid.

"But, the tax stamp is not effective in stopping illicit cigarettes. Statistics show that six out of 10 cigarette sticks out there are illicit," he said.

The source pointed out that tobacco companies were paying seven sen for each tax stamp used on a box of cigarettes.

"A company called Lembah Sari Sdn Bhd manufactures the tax stamps and makes seven sen for each stamp.

"I'm not sure whether the new TTT system will replace the tax stamp or complement it. Either way, there are many questions about how effective the new system will be in fighting illicit cigarettes and preventing those born after 2007 from smoking," he said.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NATION

Reports by MARTIN CARVALHO, TARRENCE TAN, RAGANANTHINI VETHASALAM, JOSEPH KAOS Jr, ALIZA SHAH and IYLIA MARSYA ISKANDAR

Further scrutiny for GEG Bill

Khairy: Anti-smoking laws must be brought back in next meeting

KUALA LUMPUR: The proposed generational end game (GEG) anti-smoking laws must be brought back to the Dewan Rakyat in October, says Khairy Jamaluddin.

The Health Minister said this was one of the conditions attached to a motion tabled in Dewan Rakyat to refer the Control of Tobacco Product and Smoking Bill 2022 to a Parliamentary Special Select Committee (PSSC) for further scrutiny.

"The PSSC has to prepare its proposal to improve the Bill to regulate tobacco products, substitutes and devices within a month.

"The PSSC can extend the duration if there is a need but it cannot go beyond the first day of the Third Meeting of the Fifth Term of the 14th Parliament," he said.

The next meeting is scheduled to start on Oct 26.

Khairy, who will chair the 13-member PSSC, said the committee would be tasked with looking into the enforcement clause and proposed penalties under the Bill.

"This will include recommendations by Members of Parliament during the debate," he said.

The PSSC is also allowed to invite legal experts, members of civil societies, including individuals, to give their views, he said.

Khairy asked that the Bill be slot-



Moving ahead:

The PSSC will be looking into the enforcement clause and proposed penalties under the Bill.

ted as the first order of business in the House once the committee has completed its work.

"I wouldn't say the Bill is being delayed but that it is being referred to the PSSC.

"I hope we will all support the Bill when it is brought back to the House," he said before tabling the motion which was later passed unanimously by a voice vote.

He said that while waiting for the Bill to be tabled again, existing laws must be enforced.

"It can be detrimental if we continue to let people sell without checking the contents of what is being sold," he said, referring to vape liquid with its contents currently unregulated.

Besides Khairy, the members of the PSSC are Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim (BN-Baling), Datuk Mohd Nizar Zakaria (BN-Parit), Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said (BN-Pengerang), Datuk Mas Ermeyati Samsudin (PN-Masjid Tanah) and Ahmad Fadhli Shaari

(PN-Pasir Mas).

Other members are Lukanisman Awang Sauni (GPS-Sibuti), Dr Kelvin Yil (PH-Bandar Kuching), R. Sivarasa (PH-Sungai Buloh), Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (PH-Kuala Selangor), Datuk Seri Madius Tangau (PH-Tuaran), Datuk Ignatius Dorell Leiking (Warisan-Penampang) and Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir (Pejuang-Jerlun).

Before the motion was tabled, Khairy acknowledged that there were differing views among MPs on

the proposed law.

"We have agreed to refer the Bill to a PSSC. We don't want important Bills like this to be passed without thorough fine tuning.

"If we enforce (voting) now, there may be some who will be forced to agree or disagree," he said.

The Bill was tabled for first reading in the Dewan Rakyat last Wednesday and came up for a second reading on Monday with the goal of passing it yesterday.

However, there was still resistance to the Bill even though several tweaks were made to it.

On Monday, Opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim wrote to the Prime Minister asking to refer the Bill to the PSSC.

Several MPs have voiced their reservations over the enforcement of the law.

Under the proposed Bill, children born from Jan 1, 2007 onwards are prohibited from smoking, buying or possessing any type of smoking products, including electronic cigarettes or vape products, even after they reach the age of 18 years old.

The law is targeted for implementation by 2025. Those flouting the law may be punished with a maximum fine of RM500, a reduction from the RM5,000 proposed initially.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NATION

Parents more ready to send vaccinated kids to school

By N. TRISHA
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GEORGE TOWN: Despite rising Covid-19 cases of late, Malaysian parents are now much more ready to send their children to school.

Insurance executive Farah Hazwani Othman, who has three children aged seven, eight and 10, said the increase in Covid-19 infections had not fazed her.

"Since they have all been fully vaccinated, I do not stop them from going to school, unless they them-

selves are unwell.

"I would prefer they go to school and have face-to-face lessons," said Farah, 37.

"As long as they know how to be careful and wash their hands or keep their masks on, I am not too worried," she added.

Since online lessons are no longer being offered, she said her children would be behind in their lessons if they skip school.

Jery Yeoh, who is the founder and executive director of WhyteHouse Education Group, said the situation

was different now that most people are vaccinated.

He said the attendance at his three kindergartens and daycare centres had been affected lately but this was due to the absentees having to be quarantined and not because the parents were reluctant to send their children for classes amid the rising cases.

"Children who have taken ill or have been exposed to someone with Covid-19 usually are the ones who don't turn up.

"Their parents would inform us

that their children are being quarantined at home," he said, citing the latest case in which one child was absent yesterday because his sister had Covid-19.

Yeoh acknowledged that "one or two parents" were still afraid and would take extra precautionary measures, but they were no longer panicky like before.

He also voiced his appreciation to parents who are honest about their children being exposed to those with Covid-19.

"They take the initiative to quar-

antine their children and only send them to classes when they are cleared of the infection."

He said the children's temperature would be checked every day when they come for class.

Consultant paediatrician Dr Tan Eng Guan said vaccinated children recovered better and could get back to their routine without complications.

"A lot of children have gone back to school and had Covid-19. They then quarantine, recover and go back to school again," he said.

AKHBAR : THE SUN

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : NEWS WITHOUT BORDERS

Need for proper health emergency info management

SHAH ALAM: The infodemic situation needs to be managed systematically to reduce its impact on public behaviour during health emergencies, said Health Deputy Director-General (Public Health) Datuk Dr Norhayati Rusli.

She said an infodemic is a situation where there is too much information, including false or misleading information, in digital and physical environments during an outbreak.

"An infodemic causes confusion and risk-taking behaviour that can harm health. It also leads to mistrust in health authorities and undermines public health response," she said in a video that was broadcast at the 7th Asia-Pacific Conference on Public Health 2022 yesterday.

Norhayati said an infodemic could intensify or lengthen outbreaks when people were unsure about what they needed to do to protect their health and the people around them.

"With growing digitisation, the expansion of social media and internet information can spread rapidly. This becomes a double-edged sword, where information voids can be filled quickly and harmful messages can be amplified at speed," she added. The case of Covid-19 shows the critical impact of this new information environment.

"It is the first true social media infodemic since social media became the main source of information and ultimate channel for communication and interaction.

"It may be useful to think of misinformation and disinformation spreading through social media in the same way as viruses," she said.

Infodemic management aims to enable good health practices through activities, including listening to community concerns and questions, promoting understanding of risks and health expert advice, building resilience to misinformation and engaging as well as empowering communities to take positive action. - Bernama

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Tobacco Control Bill referred to parliamentary select panel

KUALA LUMPUR: The Dewan Rakyat yesterday passed a motion to refer the Control of Tobacco Product and Smoking Bill, which targets the Generation End Game for smoking by 2040 to a parliamentary select committee.

The committee, comprising 13 government and opposition members of Parliament (MP), will be chaired by Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin.

The government MP in the committee are Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim (BN-Baling), Datuk Mohd Nizar Zakaria (BN-Parit), Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said (BN-Pengerang), Datuk Mas Ermieyati Samsudin (Bersatu-Masjid Tanah), Ahmad Fadhli Shaari (PAS-Pasir Mas) and Lukanisman Awang Sauni (GPS-Sibuti).

Opposition representatives are Dr Kelvin Yii Lee Wuen (PH-Bandar Kuching), R. Sivarasa (PH-Sungai Buloh), Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (PH-Kuala Selangor), Datuk Seri Madius Tangau (Upko-Tuaran), Datuk Ignatius Dorell Leiking (Warisan-Penampang) and Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir (Pejuang-Jerlun).

Khairy said the proposal was made based on Standing Order 54(2) to hand over the Bill to the committee concerned.

He said it is to enable the committee to make recommendations to study the enforcement part of the Bill, and to propose any improvements if necessary.

He added that at the same time, it is to study the clauses on penalty for offences as well as improvement proposals to regulate tobacco products, smoking substances, tobacco replacement products or smoking devices.

"The special select committee can extend the period, if necessary, but it should not exceed the first day of the third meeting, fifth term of the 14th Parliament," he said when tabling the motion. - Bernama