

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 9
RUANGAN : NASIONAL



AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

8

Utusan Malaysia
KHAMIS • 16 MEI 2024

17 tahun insentif BIPB jururawat tidak naik

Oleh YASMIN NATASHA HAIRUL
yasmin.hairul@medemula.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Kadar Bayaran Insentif Pos Basik (BIPB) sebanyak RM100 sebulan kepada lebih 38,000 jururawat yang memiliki kelayakan pos basik perlu dinaikkan supaya berbaloi dengan bebanan tugas selain mengelak lebih ramai dalam kalangan mereka berhenti kerja.

Kadar bayaran insentif itu yang tidak pernah dinaikkan sejak 17 tahun lalu adalah bayaran kepada anggota paramedik Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) yang memiliki sijil pos basik dan diploma lanjutan dalam bidang diluluskan daripada Institusi Latihan KKM (ILKKM).

Berdasarkan pemberitahuan pertanyaan bukan lisan di Dewan Negara yang dikeluarkan pada 4 April lalu, seramai 352

daripada 38,921 jururawat yang memiliki kelayakan pos basik meletak jawatan dalam tempoh lima tahun sejak 2019.

Jumlah tertinggi adalah pada tahun lalu iaitu sebanyak 118 jururawat meletak jawatan.

Bercakap kepada *Utusan Malaysia*, Presiden Kesatuan Jururawat Malaysia (MNU), Saaidah Athman berkata, persatuan itu masih menunggu jawapan kerajaan berhubung kenaikan kadar bayaran tersebut.

"Sebenarnya kami sudah menghantar kertas kerja berkaitan isu ini sejak 2018. Namun, masih tiada jawapan daripada mana-mana pihak walaupun dimaklumkan kerajaan sekarang sedang meneliti perkara tersebut," katanya ketika dihubungi.

Kerajaan meluluskan BIPB pada kadar RM100 setiap bulan kepada semua anggota paramedik

dik daripada KKM yang memiliki sijil pos basik dalam satu daripada 26 bidang penjawatan kritikal dan pengkhususan kritikal sejak 2007.

Dalam pada itu, Presiden Persatuan Perubatan Malaysia (MMA), Dr. Azizan Abdul Aziz berkata, secara amnya ramai jururawat keluar bekerja di luar negara kerana jumlah bayaran tambahan yang lebih menarik.

"Kami tidak tahu sebab sebenarnya mengapa ramai jururawat letak jawatan tahun lepas tetapi boleh menjadi banyak sebab.

"Negara luar seperti Singapura, Australia dan negara-negara di Asia Barat yang mengam-bil jururawat dari Malaysia ini mempunyai mata wang yang lebih kukuh (kadar pertukaran).

"Sesetengah jururawat peroleh pendapatan sehingga tiga kali ganda di luar negara," ujarnya.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 29
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

2,642 kompaun denggi, nilai RM1.3 juta dikeluarkan KKM

PUTRAJAYA: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mengeluarkan sebanyak 2,642 kompaun bernilai kira-kira RM1.3 juta bagi tujuan pencegahan dan kawalan penyakit denggi sepanjang bulan lalu.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr. Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan berkata, purata kompaun bernilai RM500 itu dikeluarkan

melalui tindakan penguatkuasaan Akta Pemusnahan Serangga Pembawa Penyakit (APSP) 1975 bagi tujuan pencegahan dan kawalan penyakit denggi.

Katanya, sejumlah 437 kes didaftarkan untuk tindakan mahkamah dan 64 kes disabitkan kesalahan di mahkamah dengan jumlah denda sekitar RM140,700.

"Melalui penguatkuasaan Peraturan-Peraturan Kawalan Hasil Tembaku (PPKHT) 2004 pula, daripada 17,719 premis dilawati, sejumlah 7,195 notis kesalahan dikeluarkan.

"Sejumlah 4,133 kompaun dikeluarkan dengan nilai melebihi RM1 juta," katanya dalam satu kenyataan semalam.

Muhammad Radzi berkata, melalui tindakan penguatkuasaan Akta Makanan 1983 pula, 6,818 premis makanan diperiksa.

Katanya, jumlah premis makanan yang diperintah penutupan sementara di bawah Seksyen 11, Akta Makanan 1983 adalah 154 premis iaitu 2.25 peratus daripada keseluruhan premis diperiksa.

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

Medical specialists wanted

Many hands make light work

BY 2030, Malaysia's population is estimated to be 38 million people. As the population grows, so will its healthcare needs. This is especially so when it comes to medical specialists. Based on the Health Ministry's figures, there were 8,953 specialists last year. If percentages of specialists to non-specialists are of any help — they are for planning purposes — developed countries have between 41 and 60 per cent. Malaysia came in at 15.7 per cent, wrote Dr Hirman Ismail of the Health Ministry's Medical Development Division in the *Malaysian Journal of Medical Science* on April 18 last year. If percentages are hard to wrap the mind around, try ratios. With some help from the Academy of Medicine of Malaysia (AMM), we learn that Malaysia has four specialists for every 10,000 people.

If media reports are right, our public health service needs 28,000 specialists by 2030. To jump from 9,000 to 28,000 in six years is quite a leap. Perhaps this is why only half of the 140 or so government hospitals around the country are manned by specialists. Public hospitals and health institutions aren't the only ones facing shortage of specialists. Public universities, too, are in deficit of specialist lecturers. Estimates vary, but at least several thousands are needed to meet the 2030 target of 28,000

As the population grows, so will its healthcare needs.

specialists. Can Malaysia produce 28,000 specialists in six years? Yes, if two things happen. Firstly, the government must keep the attrition rate — one media report put it at 890 specialists between 2018 and 2022 — to the barest minimum, says an ophthalmologist who doesn't want to be named. This may be due to either push or pull factors. While the pull factors — mostly "offers that can't be refused" from hospitals in Australia, Britain and the United States — are really hard to deal with, the push factors are within the public hospitals' control. Burnout is one issue among specialists that the Malaysian Medical Association highlighted as recently as February. Yes, specialists — though only in certain patient-heavy departments — suffer burnout, too. Who wouldn't if you work your normal hours from 8am to 5pm and then begin your on-call duty from 5pm to 8am?

Secondly, all the players from the Health Ministry, Higher Education Ministry, MMA to AMM must work together to help meet the 2030 target. The good news is, it is already happening. Expediting the process of churning out the specialists is certainly a no-no. Currently, it takes four years of postgraduate study at the 11 public universities and one private university. To keep to the international standard, the four-year study period must be maintained. According to the ophthalmologist, the passing rate is high. There is something else that can be done to ensure Malaysia is able to produce the number of specialists it wants. The answer lies in the Health Ministry's "parallel pathway", which is really a fellowship programme doctors enrol in while working their "burnout" hours. Done this way, it takes anything between five to six years. But the passing rate is low, says the ophthalmologist. Understandably so. Directors of hospitals where the doctors work can help by putting them on half a shift while the other half is used for study. By advancing the doctor's goal, the hospital attains its own.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 1

RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN

Check maids at source

Foreign maids have been diagnosed with health issues and mental health conditions - but only after they are already in the country. Employers and health experts now want tighter medical checks in source countries, and the Health Ministry says it is ready to recommend more stringent tests if needed.

> See reports on pages 4 and 5
by RAGANANTHINI
VETHASALAM, ALLISON
LAI and NELSON
BENJAMIN



AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NATION

4 Nation

THE STAR, THURSDAY 16 MAY 2024

Ironing out maids' health issues

Experts: Better pre-departure screening needed to protect Malaysians

By RAGANANTHINI VETHASALAM
raga@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Source countries must do more thorough health checks on domestic maids heading to Malaysia in light of the rising number of tuberculosis (TB) cases in this country, say employers and health experts.

More rigorous pre-departure health screenings will ensure that the maids, who will be living in local households, are truly free from communicable diseases or other medical conditions such as heart problems, they said.

The mental health of domestic maids is another aspect employers want authorities in source countries to check before allowing them to come to Malaysia.

This is to ensure that employers are not burdened later with having to manage hires suffering from mental health issues.

Two employers who shared their experiences said they were shocked when maids whom they had employed for several years were found to have mental health issues.

"The matter must be dealt with in the source country and not after they arrive here.

"It is unfair for an employer after paying so much to end up with a maid who is mentally unstable," said an employer here.

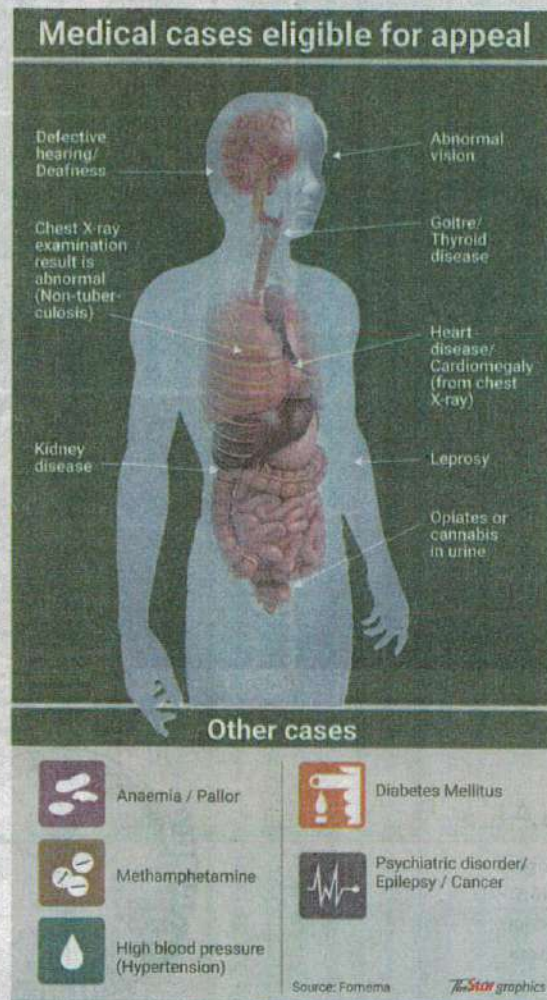
"It is unfair not only to the employer but also to the particular maid, who may not be aware of having a serious health issue.

"This issue must be addressed by health authorities here and, more importantly, in the source countries," said another employer from Klang.

Malaysia recorded 26,781 TB cases last year (2023) – a 5.47% increase from the 25,391 cases reported in 2022.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said on May 12 that a total of 8,856 TB cases have been recorded nationwide this year.

Dzulkefly said his ministry was aware that some cases involved foreigners who entered the coun-



try illegally.

The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) said it supported the call for more stringent pre-departure health checks.

MMA president Dr Aziz Abdul Aziz said there was also a challenge in addressing health conditions of illegal or undocumented migrants.

"Since this group lacks medical records, their health status remains largely unknown," she said.

Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia suggested that foreign workers be sent to quarantine centres while waiting for the results of their screening or when the results are ambiguous.

This would reduce the transmission rate of any potential diseases before they are sent to their places of employment, she said.

Public health expert Datuk Dr Zainal Ariffin Omar said authorities must continue to monitor the quality of screening done by local and foreign health providers.

He also suggested that local employers must send their domestic helpers for another screening to ensure that they are in good health.

The Health Ministry said it was prepared to recommend that domestic maids undergo more stringent medical examinations in their source country if the need arises.

"If the ministry identifies gaps or deficiencies in the health checks conducted in the source countries, it may recommend improvements to ensure that foreign workers entering Malaysia are in good health and free from communicable diseases.

"These recommendations could include expanding the scope of health checks, implementing stricter protocols, or enhancing the quality assurance processes within the source country's healthcare system," the ministry said in a statement to *The Star*.

The ministry said the existing Fomema health screening format had been tightened since Dec 16, 2023, with the inclusion of three additional tests for hepatitis C, filariasis and a urine test for methamphetamine.

"These additional screenings help ensure that foreign workers entering Malaysia are in good health and free from communicable diseases that could pose a risk to public health," the ministry said.

The ministry said it was monitoring statistics on the screening of foreign workers by Fomema.

Data on the outcome of the screening – either fit or unfit to work – is available for the listed diseases.

"However, this data should be treated with caution since it's only a screening test and not confirmatory.

"We continuously work with Fomema to improve the quality of data collection and analysis to better understand and address health risks among foreign workers," it added.

Fomema announced on Jan 3 that all foreign workers must undergo mandatory health screenings annually in Malaysia.

Previously, such workers would have to go for medical examinations for the first three years, followed by screenings every other year.

Fomema implements Category One and Two medical screenings.

Category One refers to individuals deemed unsuitable for employment in Malaysia.

Diseases under this category are TB, Viral Hepatitis B, Viral Hepatitis C, syphilis, HIV, malaria, filariasis, leprosy, psychiatric illness, epilepsy and cancer.

Category Two refers to those with incurable or chronic diseases or conditions necessitating extensive treatment. These workers may be deemed unsuitable for employment in Malaysia.

Diseases in this category are hypertension, heart disease, bronchial asthma, diabetes, peptic ulcer and kidney disease, among others.

The health screening format was further tightened in December last year, when three new tests for Hepatitis C, filariasis and urine testing for methamphetamine were introduced.

Currently, the Immigration Department only allows recruiting foreign domestic maids aged between 21 and 45 from Indonesia, Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, India, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 5
RUANGAN : NATION

Unmasking hidden health hazards with annual tests

By RAGANANTHINI
VETHASALAM
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Health checks on foreign workers have to be done every year because some diseases may not present symptoms during screening but would only manifest later, says the Foreign Workers Medical Examination Monitoring Agency (Fomema).

Its CEO Dr Mohd Afiq Farhan Md Haniff said Fomema selects the diseases it screens for based on robust data analysis and the latest health guidelines.

"We continuously review and update our protocols in collaboration with the Health Ministry to ensure our screenings remain current and aligned with the evolving landscape of health risks," he said.

"However, it is important to acknowledge that some diseases may not present symptoms at the time of screening," he said when asked to comment on whether the screenings are thorough.

"Therefore, annual screenings are imperative to detect any latent or undetected diseases promptly," he added.

Dr Afiq said yearly screenings

are essential for early disease detection.

"These include documenting medical history, physical examination and laboratory tests for blood and urine, as well as a chest X-ray examination.

"Given the increasing threat of infectious diseases, we need to prioritise these measures, as they can have a significant impact on public health and national safety," he said.

All foreign workers must undergo a comprehensive health screening at a Fomema panel clinic upon arrival in the country. After the third year, checks were

done once every two years but Fomema has now decided that screening must be done every year.

Fomema collaborates with 3,100 panel clinics and 140 laboratories in Peninsular Malaysia and Labuan to carry out these checks.

Only those who pass these screening can be given work permits," he said, adding that those who failed could appeal.

"For conditions deemed appealable, additional tests and/or specialist assessments are required, as per the Appeal Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

approved by the Ministry of Health.

Among others, Dr Afiq said a foreign worker who fails a screening due to possible diabetes, could appeal.

The appeal process would require further diagnostic tests such as a Fasting Blood Sugar (FBS) and a HbA1c (Hemoglobin A1C) test, along with a specialist assessment to confirm if the worker is diabetic," he said.

If the test results fall within a normal range or a specialist deems the individual fit for work, the worker could be considered "suitable to work in Malaysia."

More maid cases going to tribunal

By NELSON BENJAMIN
and ALLISON LAI
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

JOHOR BARU: Maids have refused to work with employers, complained about being homesick, or had health issues, including mental health issues.

These are just some of the increasing number of cases involving maids that were brought before the Johor consumer claims tribunal, said state exco member Lee Ting Han.

He said 22 cases were recorded last year, compared with three in 2021. In 2022, there were approximately 17 cases.

Other issues involving maids included those who were not legally brought into Malaysia, as well as maids whose resumes did not match those provided by the agency, he said.

Lee said in some cases, the tribunal president directed agencies to repay employers within a reasonable limit.

"There were also claims that have been rejected due to the nature of contracts signed by maid agencies and employers," the state investment, trade, consumer affairs and human resources committee chairman said in an interview.

He also said the tribunal does not have the power to blacklist a maid agency.

However, in the event that there are more than one case filed against a particular company, he said the tribunal would refer the matter to the state Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry enforcement unit.

Lee urged maid agencies to be honest and not bring in problematic workers, adding that employ-

ers are paying a lot of money to get the right sort of maids.

"If a maid is hired to take care of an infant, she should not be expected to take care of elderly people at the same time," he said, adding that employers should also be reasonable and responsible.

Malaysians who want to file a claim with the tribunal can do so online via their tribunal website at <https://tprm.lqpdn.gov.my>.

MCA Public Services and Complaints Department head Datuk Seri Michael Chong said his department had also received complaints about domestic helpers who were suffering from "mental health issues."

"Some cases involved maids allegedly experiencing hysteria, believed to be due to 'bad spirits'.

"The employers often request a refund or replacement maids, claiming their maids had mental

"We don't trust employers without hearing from the maids. But direct communication with the maids is not always possible."

Datuk Seri Michael Chong

health problems," he said.

However, Chong said it was important to hear both sides of the story.

"We don't trust employers without hearing from the maids. But direct communication with the maids is not always possible. We usually only have access to agents who cite reasons such as overwork and mistreatment of maids by employers."

Chong also said maids could suffer from a mental breakdown but agents may dismiss this claim because there is no record of such incidents.

"Typically, agents take the maid back temporarily, provide new training, and engage in further talks.

"If employers allow this, it suggests that there is a genuine problem, whereas insistence on a refund may lead to the case being referred to the tribunal," he added.

Chong also said licensed agents would try to find a solution.

However, he said cases of pre-existing sickness and infectious diseases were rare among maids, as they are tested before they begin working.

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

THURSDAY | MAY 16, 2024
2 NATIONAL

RM1m in fines for smoking in public

PUTRAJAYA: The Health Ministry issued 4,133 compounds totalling RM1.02 million for smoking offences last month, said Health Director-General Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan.

He said a total of 7,195 notices were issued after inspecting 17,719 premises under the enforcement of the Control of Tobacco Product Regulations 2002.

Regarding enforcement actions aimed at preventing and controlling dengue fever under the Destruction of Disease-Bearing Insects Act 1975, Muhammad Radzi said 2,642 compounds for a total of RM1.3 million were issued, with an average of RM500 for each compound.

"A total of 437 cases were referred for court action and 64 cases resulted in convictions with a total fine of RM140,700," he said a statement yesterday.

Muhammad Radzi reported that last month a total of 6,818 food premises were inspected, with 154 of them ordered to close under Section 11 of the Food Act 1983.

"The temporary closure of food premises enforced by the ministry ensures the cleanliness of both the premises and the food served," he added. - Bernama

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

Cancer society seeks funds for HPV vaccination drive

➤ Nationwide campaign expected to cost RM9 million and would benefit 300,000 underprivileged girls in rural communities

■ BY JOSHUA PURUSHOTMAN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: The National Cancer Society Malaysia (NCSM) is appealing to the public and corporations for donations to raise RM9 million for an on-ground project to vaccinate underprivileged girls against cervical cancer.

Its managing director Dr M. Muralitharan said the not-for-profit organisation spends about RM10 million yearly on activities that directly impact the public.

He said NCSM requires the funds to continue providing cancer awareness education and care, and support services for people affected by the disease.

"This include free cancer screening, diagnostics and treatment for rural and underprivileged communities, psychosocial support, free transit housing for patients and caregivers, subsidised cancer medication, and

wellness and return to work programmes."

He said NCSM also provides holistic cancer-related services to patients, caregivers and the public through its six centres - Cancer and Health Screening Clinic, Nuclear Medicine Centre, Resource and Wellness Centre, Quit Smoking Clinic, Children's Home of Hope and Adults' Home of Hope.

Muralitharan said this year, NCSM is focusing on human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination as it plans to vaccinate 300,000 rural and underprivileged girls nationwide.

"This will prevent cervical cancer. We received 300,000 vaccine doses worth RM90 million for free from a manufacturer, Merck Sharp and Dohme. However, we need to raise RM9 million to carry out the on-ground project to vaccinate the girls."

He said raising the RM9 million is critical as NCSM is financed only through public donations and does not receive any government grants.

Muralitharan said as part of its outreach to raise funds, UMW Toyota Motor Sdn Bhd (UMWT) will be organising the Toyota "Start Your Impossible" outrun on June 23, which will be held under the umbrella of Toyota's global Start Your Impossible campaign.

UMWT president Datuk K. Ravindran said the event serves as a testament to the dedication of the company in helping those in need.

"Cancer ranks as the fourth leading cause of death in Malaysia. This highlights the critical

need to raise awareness and rally support for NCSM. By uniting with it through sport, we can significantly impact the lives of cancer patients and their families, while also supporting vital research and services aimed at combating the disease."

He said part of the proceeds from the event will be allocated to supporting NCSM in its efforts to raise cancer awareness, fund research and provide vital support services to patients and their families.

"UMWT has raised funds for NCSM through the run for the past three years.

"The company also topped up our funds so we could purchase a Toyota Innova, which is used by our mobile teams to visit rural areas and conduct screenings and other activities."

Established in 1966, NCSM is headquartered in Kuala Lumpur and has branches in Malacca, Negeri Sembilan, Penang, Perak and Sarawak.

Those keen to make donations to the organisation may claim tax exemption.

NCSM is currently under the patronage of His Royal Highness Sultan Paduka Seri Sultan Perak Darul Ridzuan, Sultan Nazrin Muizzudin Shah.

To learn more about the Toyota "Start Your Impossible" outrun and to register as a participant, please visit https://v2.checkpointspot.asia/registration/toyota_sy_i_outrun_2024.

Registration for the run will remain open until June 2.