

Govt urged to provide subsidies for antigen rapid test kits

By Dawn Chan - March 22, 2022



The government has been urged to provide subsidies on Covid-19 Antigen Rapid Test Kits (RTK-Ag) so that the price remains affordable to the people. - Bernama file pic

KUALA LUMPUR: The government has been urged to provide subsidies on Covid-19 Antigen Rapid Test Kits (RTK-Ag) so that the price remains affordable to the people.

Cha Kee Chin (PH-Rasah) told the Dewan Rakyat that he observed that the prices of RTK-Ag had risen after the recent Chinese New Year celebrations.

"Back in January, it cost between RM3 and RM4. But after the celebrations, as cases increased and the numbers stayed high, the price of the RTK-Ag self test kits rose.

"The Health Minister (Khairy Jamaluddin) had also urged the people to use the RTK-Ag as it is simple to use and cheaper, compared to Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) tests.

"I ask the government to provide these subsidies as the nation transitions into the endemic phase," said Cha when debating the Supplementary Bill today.

Khairy had asked Malaysians to reduce reliance on RT-PCR and shift towards RTK-Ag to screen for Covid-19.

RT-PCR tests, he said, were costly while RTK-Ag self test kits were cheaper and more easily available.

He added that according to experts, the RTK-Ag tests were sufficient to detect positive cases with higher infectivity rates.