

Don't wait for the monkeypox time bomb to explode, says Gerakan man

By Audrey Dermawan - May 25, 2022 @ 1:06pm



It was reported that the Health Ministry was closely monitoring the monkeypox outbreak that had affected countries in the European, African and American continent, as well as Australia in the Oceania region. - REUTERS Pic

GEORGE TOWN: Gerakan has urged Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin to step in to arrest raising concerns of the monkeypox viral infection.

The government, according to Gerakan vice president Datuk Baljit Singh, implies that Malaysia faces no real threat of a monkeypox outbreak.

"Should we not be on guard for any eventuality as our borders are now opened to international travellers?"

"Are any standard operating procedures (SOP) and follow-up actions being put in place to get travellers from affected countries to self-monitor and get checked should monkeypox symptoms develop?"

"Our international airports and other public transport handling tourists need to be armed with the right protocols for diagnosis, treatment and quarantine if and when a positive case is confirmed.

"The last thing we need now is to further burden our healthcare system and economy which is barely recovering from the onslaught of Covid-19 for the past two years," he said today.

, Baljit said, although health experts had advised the public who are travelling abroad to take the chickenpox vaccine (supposedly 85 per cent effective against monkeypox), there was no clarification or feedback from the authorities whether the government and private hospitals have adequate supply of this vaccine.

He added that although it was reported that the monkeypox disease may be rarely fatal to humans, Malaysia should not waste time in introducing precautions and restrictions to limit the spread of this outbreak.

"This could yet be another explosive situation...the Health Minister (Khairy Jamaluddin) must step in to arrest the raising concerns of this viral infection.

"Efforts must also be made to check for any incidences of infection among our animal population.

"Malaysia can no longer afford to close its borders to travellers, nor allow this latest infection to be the cause of further lockdowns," he added.

It was reported that the Health Ministry was closely monitoring the monkeypox outbreak that had affected countries in the European, African and American continent, as well as Australia in the Oceania region.

Its director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah had said that apart from closely monitoring the progress of monkeypox cases based on reports from the World Health Organisation (WHO), the ministry would also carry out surveillance on suspected cases of the on the viral zoonosis at all the country's international entry points.

The nation's top health official had also assured the people that the Institute for Medical Research and the National Public Health Laboratory could carry out test to detect the virus which caused monkeypox among humans.