AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 18
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

# 5,000 botol air zam zam RM1.3j gagal diseludup

*Nor Izah menunjukkan air zam zam bernilai RM1.3 juta yang dirampas dalam pemeriksaan di Kompleks Imigresen, Kastam, Kuarantin dan Keselamatan (ICQS) Bukit Kayu Hitam.* (Foto Zuliaty Zulkiffli/BH)

## Lori kontena dinaiki 2 warga Thailand bawa produk disembunyi belakang pelembut kain

**Oleh Zuliaty Zulkiffli**
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**Alor Setar:** Jabatan Kastam Diraja Malaysia (JKDM) Kedah menggagalkan percubaan menyeludup 5,000 botol air zam zam dengan anggaran 25,000 liter bernilai RM1.3 juta termasuk cukai dalam pemeriksaan di Kompleks Imigresen, Kastam, Kuarantin dan Keselamatan (ICQS) Bukit Kayu Hitam, Selasa lalu.

Pengarah JKDM Kedah, Nor Izah Abdul Latif, berkata ia susulan pemeriksaan lanjut pegawainya terhadap sebuah lori kontena yang sarat membawa kotak mengandungi bahan pelembut pakaian sebelum menemui botol air zam zam tanpa permit yang cuba diseludup ke negara ini.

Beliau berkata, semua air zam zam dengan masing-masing bersaiz lima liter itu dipercayai disorok di bahagian depan kontena, manakala di bahagian belakang diletakkan botol pelembut pakaian untuk mengaburi pihak berkuasa.

Katanya, rampasan dilakukan ketika pihaknya memeriksa sebuah lori kontena dinaiki dua lelaki warga Thailand berusia 59 dan 20-an kira-kira 11 malam.

Beliau berkata, kedua-duanya yang tidak fasih berbahasa Melayu juga dilihat dalam keadaan mencurigakan sebelum pihaknya melakukan pemeriksaan lanjut dalam kontena itu yang disusun dengan kotak mengandungi botol pelembut pakaian.

"Pemeriksaan menemui barangan yang tidak diikrar iaitu botol air zam zam dalam kontena berkenaan.

"Berikutan itu, pemandu dan kelindan lori terbabit bersama kontena dibawa ke Stor Penguatkuasaan JKDM Bukit Kayu Hitam untuk tindakan lanjut.

"Hasil siasatan mendapati lori kontena itu didapati memasuki negara ini melalui ICQS dengan mengikrarkan dagangan sebagai botol pelembut pakaian menggunakan borang Kastam 1," katanya pada sidang media di Kompleks Kastam Kedah, di sini, semalam.

### Ketulenan air diragui

Nor Izah berkata, berdasarkan kenyataan Bahagian Keselamatan dan Kualiti Makanan (BKKM) Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) memaklumkan tiada pengedar atau syarikat di negara ini diberikan lesen bagi import dan penjualan air zam zam.

"Kita juga meragui ketulenan air zam zam ini memandangkan Arab Saudi tidak mengeksport air zam zam ke dalam pasaran.

"Kita percaya botol pelembut yang diikrar itu hanyalah sebagai 'dummy' untuk mengaburi pihak kastam dan disusun penuh di pintu kontena untuk menyukarkan pegawai memeriksa keseluruhan dagangan yang terdapat di dalam kontena itu," katanya.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : LOKAL

SEDIA TEMPAT KHAS MEROKOK

# KKM sedia dengar syor

**Kuala Lumpur:** Kementerian Kesihatan bersedia mempertimbang pandangan pelbagai pihak berhubung cadangan menyediakan kawasan khas merokok, terutama bagi premis makanan di kawasan sempit.

Menterinya, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkifly Ahmad berkata, ia bagi memastikan penyelesaian terbaik dan menyeluruh diwujudkan, sebelum sebarang keputusan dimuktamadkan.

Beliau berkata, pihaknya terbuka bagi sebarang syor munasabah dan praktikal untuk memastikan larangan merokok di premis makanan di seluruh negara sentiasa dikuatkuasakan.

"Ia asalnya pandangan kami (selepas) disyorkan melalui libat urus (bersama) lebih 30 pemilik premis dan penjaja (di Jalan Alor, di sini).

"Namun, kalau ia (cadangan mansuh syor menyediakan kawasan khas merokok) diminta, kami pertimbangkan dan melihat praktikaliti dan kemunasabahan pelaksanaannya. Maksudnya kami dengar, tidak terlalu *rigid*.

"Saya sebut perkara ini (cadangan menyediakan kawasan khas merokok) dengan segala pertanggungjawaban, keinsafan dan kesedaran yang kita tidak berpatah balik ke belakang (memansuhkan larangan merokok di premis makanan)," katanya selepas merasmikan Mesyuarat Jawatankuasa Codex bagi Lemak dan Minyak (CCFO) Ke-28 di sini, semalam.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO
MUKA SURAT : 13
RUANGAN : LOKAL

NOR Izah menunjukkan air zamzam bernilai RM1.3 juta dalam sebuah kontena yang tidak diikrarkan.

# 5,000 botol air zamzam dirampas

**Alor Setar:** Sebuah lori kontena bermuatan bahan pelembut pakaian dikesan cuba menyeludup masuk 5,000 botol air zamzam tanpa permit ke negara ini dipercayai untuk jualan sempena kedatangan Ramadan ini.

Kegiatan itu terbongkar apabila pegawai Jabatan Kastam Diraja Malaysia (JKDM) menemukan air zamzam bernilai RM1.3 juta termasuk cukai dalam kontena terbabit pada 13 Februari lalu.

Pemeriksaan dilakukan di Kompleks Imigresen, Kastam, Kuarantin dan Keselamatan (ICQS) Bukit Kayu Hitam selepas menerima maklumat.

Kesemua air zamzam dengan setiap botol mengandungi lima liter itu disorok di bahagian depan kontena manakala di bahagian belakang diletakkan botol pelembut pakaian untuk mengaburi pihak berkuasa.

Pengarah JKDM Kedah, Nor Izah Abdul Latif berkata, rampasan dilakukan ketika pihaknya memeriksa sebuah lori kontena dinaiki dua lelaki warga Thailand berusia 59 tahun dan 20-an kira-kira jam 11 malam.

Menurutnya, kedua-dua lelaki terbabit yang tidak fasih berbahasa Melayu juga dilihat dalam keadaan mencurigakan.

Katanya, pasukan kemudian melakukan pemeriksaan lanjut dalam kontena itu yang disusun dengan kotak mengandungi botol bahan pelembut pakaian.

"Pemeriksaan menemui barangan yang tidak diikrar iaitu botol air zamzam dalam kontena berkenaan.

"Berikutan itu, pemandu dan kelindan lori terbabit bersama kontena dibawa ke Stor Penguatkuasaan JKDM Bukit Kayu Hitam untuk tindakan lanjut.

"Hasil siasatan mendapati lori kontena itu didapati memasuki negara ini melalui ICQS Bukit Kayu Hitam dengan mengikrarkan dagangan sebagai botol pelembut pakaian menggunakan borang kastam," katanya pada sidang media di Kompleks Kastam Kedah di sini, semalam.

Nor Izah berkata, hasil pemeriksaan lanjut menemui 5,000 liter air zamzam yang tidak diikrar dan tiada permit dengan anggaran sebanyak 25,000 liter bernilai RM1.3 juta termasuk cukai.

Menurutnya, berdasarkan kenyataan Bahagian Keselamatan dan Kualiti Makanan (BKKM) Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) memaklumkan tiada pengedar atau syarikat di negara ini diberikan lesen bagi import dan penjualan air zamzam.

"Pihak kami juga meragui ketulenan air zamzam ini memandangkan Arab Saudi tidak mengeksport air zamzam ke dalam pasaran.

"Kita percaya botol pelembut pakaian yang diikrar itu hanyalah sebagai *dummy* untuk mengaburi pihak kastam dan disusun penuh di pintu kontena untuk menyukarkan pegawai memeriksa keseluruhan dagangan yang terdapat di dalam kontena itu.

"Air zamzam ini dipercayai diseludup masuk dari negara jiran untuk mengelak daripada cukai," katanya.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 10
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

# Cadangan belum muktamad

## KKM terbuka terima pandangan berkaitan syor wujud kawasan khas merokok

**KUALA LUMPUR**

Syor bagi mewujudkan kawasan khas merokok khususnya di premis makanan yang mempunyai kawasan sempit masih belum dimuktamadkan.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad berkata, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) sentiasa terbuka menerima pandangan orang ramai termasuk libat urus bersama pemilik premis dan penjaja seperti yang diadakan baru-baru ini.

"Itu adalah asal pandangan kami. Kita adakan libat urus dengan lebih 30 pemilik premis dan penjaja. Kalau ia (kawasan khas merokok) diminta, kami akan pertimbangkan dan melihat kepada praktikalnya atau kemunasabahan perkara itu dilakukan.

"Maksudnya kami mendengar, bukannya terlalu *rigid*," katanya selepas merasmikan Persidangan Jawatankuasa Codex berkaitan Minyak dan Lemak (CCFO) sesi ke-28 di sini pada Isnin.

DR DZULKEFLY

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, hasil pemerhatiannya semasa berkunjung ke premis makanan yang sempit dan terbuka mendapati individu tidak merokok seperti kanak-kanak, ibu mengandung serta warga tua berasa tidak selesa apabila terhidu asap rokok daripada perokok sekitar mereka.

"Cumanya, kalau kita mahukan tiga meter beri kelonggaran untuk merokok dilaksanakan, kita perlu beri ruang memandangkan Jalan Alor, Bukit Bintang (contohnya) (ketika) saya turun padang lihat sendiri, adalah hampir mustahil untuk kita laksana (jarak) tiga meter," jelasnya.

Sebelum ini, media melaporkan KKM akan mempertimbangkan langkah menyediakan kawasan khas merokok khususnya bagi premis makanan di kawasan sempit sepertimana dilakukan di negara maju seperti Singapura, Jepun dan Hong Kong.

Penekanan itu diberi kepada premis di kawasan sempit dan agak sukar mematuhi jarak tiga meter untuk merokok yang dikuatkuasakan ketika ini. - *Bernama*

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 12
RUANGAN : SINAR BISNES

Cukai perkhidmatan sebanyak lapan peratus tidak akan dikenakan kepada pengamal perubatan tradisional dan komplementari yang telah berdaftar dengan KKM.

PERCUKAIAN

# PT&K dikecualikan cukai perkhidmatan

## Syaratnya perlu berdaftar dengan akta di bawah Kementerian Kesihatan

**PUTRAJAYA**

Pengamal perubatan tradisional dan komplementari yang berdaftar di bawah Akta Perubatan Tradisional dan Komplementari (PT&K) 2016 (Akta 775) akan dikecualikan daripada cukai perkhidmatan sebanyak lapan peratus, kata Menteri Kewangan II, Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan.

"Selagi mereka berdaftar dengan akta di bawah Kementerian Kesihatan, mereka akan dikecualikan daripada cukai perkhidmatan yang akan berkuat kuasa pada 1 Mac 2024," katanya kepada *Bernama* pada Isnin.

Beliau berkata, pengamal PT&K yang telah berdaftar dengan akta tersebut tidak perlu berdaftar dengan Jabatan Kastam Diraja Malaysia dan seterusnya tidak mengenakan cukai bagi perkhidmatan seperti perubatan tradisional Melayu, perubatan tradisional Cina, perubatan tradisional India, homeopati, kiropraktik, osteopati dan amalan pengubatan Islam.

"Kementerian Kewangan juga bersetuju supaya keputusan tersebut terpakai ke atas perkhidmatan yang disediakan oleh pusat kesihatan atau kesejahteraan, rumah urut atau tempat yang seumpamanya yang dikendalikan oleh pengamal PT&K yang berdaftar dengan Akta 775 bagi perkhidmatan di atas untuk tempoh sebelum 1 Mac 2024," katanya.

AMIR HAMZAH

Amir Hamzah berkata, ini adalah susulan keputusan Kementerian Kewangan agar perkhidmatan disediakan oleh pusat kesihatan atau kesejahteraan, rumah urut atau tempat seumpamanya yang dikendalikan oleh pengamal PT&K berdaftar dengan akta tersebut tidak dikategorikan sebagai perkhidmatan bercukai berkuat kuasa mulai 1 Mac 2024.

"Maklum balas ini juga telah mengambil kira perbincangan daripada sesi libat urus bersama pihak berkepentingan industri PT&K," katanya.

Beliau berkata, pengecualian cukai perkhidmatan bagi perkhidmatan PT&K ini antara usaha untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan rakyat sebagaimana yang ditekankan dalam konsep Malaysia MADANI dan diterapkan dalam kerangka Ekonomi MADANI: Memperkasa Rakyat.

"Keputusan yang dipersetujui oleh Perdana Menteri dan Menteri Kewangan Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim ini adalah langkah untuk meningkatkan keselesaan dan kesejahteraan rakyat.

"Pada masa yang sama, Kerangka Ekonomi MADANI juga akan giat memperkasakan sektor perusahaan mikro, kecil dan sederhana (PMKS) yang menggajikan hampir separuh tenaga kerja di Malaysia," katanya.

Amir Hamzah berkata, kerajaan akur bahawa jauh lagi landasan untuk melebarkan sayap PMKS tempatan ke persada antarabangsa.

"Maka pengusaha tersebut memerlukan kebergantungan permintaan domestik untuk kemandirian perniagaan mereka buat masa ini, lebih-lebih lagi bagi PMKS yang menyediakan perkhidmatan kepada rakyat Malaysia," katanya.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

DR. Dzulkefly Ahmad pada majlis perasmian Mesyuarat Jawatankuasa Codex bagi Lemak dan Minyak (CCFO) ke-28 di Kuala Lumpur, semalam. - UTUSAN/AMARULLAH ZAINUZZAMAN

# Ruang khas merokok belum dimuktamad - Dr. Dzulkefly

Oleh YASMIN NATASHA HAIRUL
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) bersedia mempertimbangkan cadangan mewujudkan ruang khas untuk merokok khususnya di premis makanan dan tempat-tempat awam lain.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr. Dzulkefly Ahmad berkata, pihaknya sedia mendengar semua cadangan dan akan memastikan penyelesaian terbaik sebelum diputuskan kelak.

"Mungkin kita akan pertimbangkan untuk tunaikan ada ruang khas kepada perokok. Kita akan mengadakan libat urus bersama pemilik-pemilik premis dan penjaja," katanya selepas merasmikan Mesyuarat Jawatankuasa Codex bagi Lemak dan Minyak (CCFO) Ke-28 di sini, semalam.

Menurut beliau, kementerian tidak mahu menjadi terlalu rigid dengan sebarang peraturan yang diwujudkan dan akan mendengar cadangan atau keluhan semua pihak.

Bagaimanapun, kata Dzulkefly, cadangan untuk mewujudkan kawasan khas merokok itu masih belum dimuktamadkan.

"Saya sendiri turut turun padang dan melihat sendiri kawasan sekitar Jalan Alor di Bukit Bintang, adalah hampir mustahil untuk kita laksanakan kawasan merokok tiga meter dari premis makanan di situ," ujarnya.

Justeru, beliau melihat kaedah mewujudkan ruang merokok seperti dilakukan di Singapura dan Jepun mungkin boleh dicontohi.

Kawasan larangan merokok terletak di bawah Peraturan 11(1) Peraturan-Peraturan Kawalan Hasil Tembakau 2004.

Di bawah peraturan itu, mana-mana orang yang didapati merokok di kawasan larangan merokok jika disabitkan kesalahan boleh didenda tidak melebihi RM10,000 atau dipenjarakan selama tempoh tidak melebihi dua tahun atau kedua-duanya sekali.

Terdapat 23 kawasan larangan yang dikuatkuasakan sejak 1 Januari 2020 termasuk di tempat makan terbuka.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 10
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

# Pengamal perubatan tradisional, komplementari

**PUTRAJAYA:** Perkhidmatan pengamal Perubatan Tradisional dan Komplementari (PT&K) tidak akan dikenakan cukai perkhidmatan seperti diwartakan sebelum ini.

Ia susulan keputusan Kementerian Kewangan agar perkhidmatan disediakan oleh pusat kesihatan atau kesejahteraan, rumah urut atau tempat seumpamanya yang dikendalikan oleh pengamal PT&K berdaftar dengan Akta Perubatan Tradisional dan Komplementari 2016 [Akta 775] tidak dikategorikan sebagai perkhidmatan bercukai berkuat kuasa mulai 1 Mac ini.

Menteri Kewangan II, Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan berkata, keputusan itu dibuat setelah mengambil kira perbincangan daripada sesi libat urus bersama pihak berkepentingan industri berkenaan.

Katanya, pengecualian cukai perkhidmatan bagi perkhidmatan PT&K ini adalah salah satu usaha untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan rakyat sebagaimana yang ditekankan dalam konsep Malaysia Madani dan diterapkan dalam kerangka Ekonomi Madani.

"Keputusan yang dipersetujui Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim sebagai langkah untuk meningkatkan kesihatan diri keselesaan dan kesejahteraan rakyat.

"Pada masa sama, Kerangka Ekonomi Madani juga akan giat memperkasakan sektor perusahaan mikro kecil dan sederhana (PMKS) yang menggajikan hampir separuh tenaga kerja di Malaysia," katanya dalam kenyataan semalam.

Sehubungan dengan keputusan tersebut, pengamal PT&K yang berdaftar dengan Akta Perubatan Tradisional dan Komplementari 2016 [Akta 775] tidak perlu berdaftar dengan Jabatan Kastam Diraja Malaysia.

Terdapat tujuh kategori dalam perkhidmatan itu tidak dikenakan cukai perkhidmatan iaitu perubatan Tradisional Melayu; Perubatan Tradisional Cina; Perubatan Tradisional India; Homeopati; Kiropraktik; Osteopati; dan Amalan Pengubatan Islam.

Kementerian Kewangan juga bersetuju supaya keputusan tersebut terpakai ke atas perkhidmatan yang disediakan oleh pusat kesihatan atau kesejahteraan, rumah urut atau tempat yang seumpamanya yang dikendalikan oleh pengamal PT&K yang berdaftar dengan Akta 775 bagi perkhidmatan tersebut untuk tempoh sebelum 1 Mac 2024.

Menurut Azizan, kerajaan akur bahawa jauh lagi landasan untuk melebarkan sayap PMKS tempatan ke persada antarabangsa.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 12
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

NOR Izah Abdul Latif (kanan) menunjukkan 'air zam zam' bernilai RM1.3 juta yang cuba diseludup melalui negara jiran di Kompleks Kastam Kedah, Alor Setar, semalam.

# 5,000 botol 'air zam zam' RM1.3 juta cuba diseludup

Oleh JAMLIAH ABDULLAH
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**ALOR SETAR:** Jabatan Kastam Diraja Malaysia (JKDM) Kedah berjaya mematahkan cubaan menyeludup air zam zam melalui negara jiran yang dipercayai untuk pasaran di negeri ini, baru-baru ini.

Pengarahnya, Nor Izah Abdul Latif berkata, sebanyak 5,000 botol air zam zam dengan isi padu lima liter setiap botol disorokkan bersama pelembut pakaian.

Menurutnya, air zam zam dengan anggaran keseluruhan 25,000 liter yang tidak diikrar itu bernilai RM1.3 juta.

"Sepasukan pegawai dan anggota dari Cawangan Penguatkuasaan dan Cawangan Import Eksport yang menerima maklumat melakukan pemeriksaan terhadap sebuah lori kontena di Kompleks Kastam, Imigresen dan Kuarantin (ICQS), Bukit Kayu Hitam kira-kira pukul 11 malam, 13 Februari lalu.

"Lori tersebut dipandu seorang warga Thailand berusia 50-an bersama kelindannya berusia 20-an," katanya dalam sidang akhbar di Kompleks Kastam Negeri di sini, semalam.

Jelas beliau, modus operandi penyeludup adalah dengan menyorok kotak air zam zam bersama muatan pelembut pakaian yang diikrar di bahagian belakang kontena bagi mengaburi mata penguat kuasa.

"Kementerian Kesihatan melalui Bahagian Keselamatan dan Kualiti Makanan mengesahkan tiada pengedar atau syarikat di Malaysia yang diberikan lesen bagi mengimport dan menjual air zam zam.

"Kita juga meragui ketulenan air zam zam ini memandangkan Arab Saudi tidak mengeksportnya ke dalam pasaran. Air zam zam ini dipercayai diseludup masuk dari negara jiran untuk mengelak daripada dikenakan duti dan cukai," katanya.

Tambahnya, kes disiasat mengikut Seksyen 135 (1) (a) Akta Kastam 1967 dan jika sabit kesalahan bagi kesalahan pertama, denda tidak kurang 10 kali nilai barang atau RM50,000.

"Kita percaya aktiviti penyeludupan ini dilakukan sempena kedatangan Ramadan tidak lama lagi," katanya.

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

# Kerajaan perlu kawal selia jualan vape

**KUALA LUMPUR :** Kerajaan perlu memperketat pengawal seliaan sistem jualan rokok elektronik dan vape di negara ini termasuk memantau kandungan dalam cecair vape yang kini banyak disalah gunakan.

Bercakap kepada *Utusan Malaysia*, Pengarah Kempen Selangor Bebas Asap Rokok (SELBAR), Dr. Mohd. Afiq Mohd. Nor berkata, ini kerana kandungan cecair vape itu tidak terkandung dalam Akta Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2023.

Kata beliau, kerajaan perlu ketatkan kawal selia sistem jualan vape ini sebab kita pun sudah ada undang-undang berkenaan perkara ini dan sekarang kita hanya perlu menunggu secara rasmi ia dikuatkuasakan.

"Pada saya ia perlu ada garis panduan yang tetap bagaimana mereka boleh menjual rokok vape ini, di mana lokasinya, kandungannya bahaya atau tidak.

"Paling penting, tiada pengiklanan secara bebas mengenai vape ini sama ada dalam talian atau sebaliknya.

"Sebab sekarang ini saya lihat, lori yang kita nampak seperti jual cendol, kini mereka sudah semakin *advance* untuk menjual vape dengan konsep yang sama, hanya di lori-lori sahaja. Ini perlu diperhatikan kembali," katanya ketika dihubungi, semalam.

Akta Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2023 yang diluluskan Parlimen pada Disember lalu, menetapkan kawal selia menyeluruh dilaksanakan bagi pengeluaran semua produk merokok termasuk vape.

Akta itu bertujuan mengatasi kelompongan undang-undang susulan pengecualian cecair vape bernikotin daripada senarai bahan terkawal Akta Racun 1952, selain selari usaha kerajaan melaksanakan cukai ke atas penjualan cecair vape untuk rokok elektronik pada kadar 40 sen setiap mililiter (ml) mulai 1 April 2023.

Selasa lalu, Ahli Parlimen Tasek Gelugor, Datuk Wan Saiful Wan Jan, turut mendesak kerajaan memperkenalkan peraturan bagi mengawal selia kandungan vape.

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

# No decision yet on smoking areas

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The suggestion to provide designated smoking areas, particularly for eateries in tight spaces, is yet to be finalised.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the ministry is open to receiving views from the public.

"It was just our viewpoint following an engagement session with over 30 premises owners and traders. If there is a request (for designated smoking areas), we will consider and assess its practicality and feasibility," he said after officiating at the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils 28th session yesterday. – Bernama

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 5
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

# *Zamzam* water worth RM1.2m seized

**ALOR SETAR:** The Customs Department seized 5,000 bottles of *zamzam* water worth more than RM1.26 million after foiling a smuggling attempt at the Bukit Kayu Hitam Immigration, Customs, Quarantine and Security Complex.

Kedah Customs director Nor Izah Abdul Latiff said the *zamzam* water was seized from a container lorry driven by a Thai man on Feb 13.

"The *zamzam* water bottles were hidden in the back of the container while the front was filled with boxes containing fabric softeners to conceal the smuggled items.

"The Health Ministry also confirmed no distributor or company in Malaysia was granted a licence to import and sell *zamzam* water."

Nor Izah said the department also crippled another attempt to smuggle in 120kg of marijuana worth RM420,000 at the Malaysian Fisheries Development Authority jetty in Sungai Berembang, Kuala Perlis on Thursday.

She also said throughout last year, 547 investigation papers were opened for various smuggling offences, with the total value of confiscated items amounting to more than RM11.9 million and unpaid duties adding up to over RM8.19 million.

"As of Feb 15, a total of 57 investigation papers were opened under the Customs Act 1967 while two cases were investigated under the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952, with the total value of the seizure amounting to over RM1 million and unpaid duties adding up to over RM538,000." – Bernama

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 5
RUANGAN : NATION

# No tax a relief for patients

## Traditional medicine services exempt from 8% SST in U-turn move

By ZAKIAH KOYA
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**PETALING JAYA:** Consumers can heave a sigh of relief as Traditional and Complementary Medicine (T&CM) services will now be exempted from the 8% Sales and Service Tax (SST) from March 1, a U-turn from what was previously gazetted.

This reversal by the Finance Ministry reflects a consideration for the well-being of the people, prioritising healthcare accessibility, said Second Finance Minister Senator Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan.

He added that this exemption aligns with the Madani Malaysia concept, which is part of the Madani Economy Rakyat empowerment framework.

"The decision was agreed upon by the Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as this is a step to improve the health and comfort of the people.

"At the same time, the Madani Economy framework will continue to empower small and medium enterprises (SMEs) which employ more than half of the labour in Malaysia.

"The government has acknowledged that SMEs still have a journey ahead before they can enter the global market.

"Therefore, these entrepreneurs rely on domestic demand for their business survival, especially those SMEs offering services to Malaysians," said Amir Hamzah in a statement.

The Finance Ministry further stated that practitioners registered under the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Act 2016 (Act 775) do not need to register with the Customs Department.

"The services which will be exempted from SST will be on traditional Malay medicines, Chinese traditional medicines, Indian traditional medicines, homeopathy, chiropractic medicines, osteopathic medicines and Islamic faith healing.

"The Finance Ministry agreed that the decision will be imposed from March 1 onwards on services provided by health and wellness centres which are run by T&CM practitioners who are registered under the Act 775 for the stated services," he said.

**Flashback:** Our report on Jan 6, 2024.

On Jan 6, *The Star* had published an article quoting T&CM practitioners questioning why they were not exempted from the 8% SST as they are categorised and recognised by the Health Ministry for providing medical services.

The Malaysian Chinese Medical Association and Association of Malay Naturopathy Medicine Practitioners Malaysia had then stated that the government needs to provide further clarification on why their services were being taxed.

"If the modern medicine field can be exempted, then why do our clients have to pay taxes for T&CM treatments?

"We definitely need more clarification on this," Malaysian Chinese Medical Association President Dr Heng Aik Teng had queried.

The Association of Malay Naturopathy Medicine Practitioners Malaysia pointed out that T&CM practitioners undergo procedures similar to modern medicine practitioners, including registering with the T&CM Council, renewing their Annual Practice Certificate, having qualifications that are recognised, and complying with Act 775.

KERATAN AKHBAR
UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA
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AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 9
RUANGAN : NATION

# Tapping into global clinic care network

## Healthcare provider's deal with US-based group boosts Malaysia's cancer, heart, lungs expertise

By AIDA AHMAD
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A PRIVATE Malaysian healthcare provider has unveiled its strategic collaboration with US-based Mayo Clinic, the largest integrated, not-for-profit medical group practice in the world.

KPJ Healthcare Bhd, through its two specialist hospitals – KPJ Damansara Specialist Hospital (KPJ DSH) and Damansara Specialist Hospital 2 (DSH 2) – has marked a historic milestone as Malaysia's first entry into the Mayo Clinic Care Network.

This signifies KPJ Healthcare's commitment to leveraging global insights in driving medical excellence and patientcare innovation, establishing a new standard for Malaysia's healthcare landscape.

KPJ Healthcare would be part of the Mayo Clinic Care Network for the next two years, said KPJ Healthcare president and managing director Chin Keat Chyuan.

Specifically, he said KPJ DSH would leverage on the collaboration to establish its oncology centre as a centre of excellence, while DSH2 would focus on its heart and lung department.

"Our doctors at these two hospitals will gain access to Mayo Clinic's clinical, educational, research and operational knowledge, resources and expertise," he said.

"This includes the opportunity for direct consultations with Mayo's experts and physicians as well as access to Mayo Clinic's cutting-edge research, diagnostic and treatment resources.

"Consequently, our patients will benefit immensely as their KPJ consultants can now seek advice from Mayo counterparts for their cases.

"We are bringing world-class healthcare closer to home, where we will not only improve our patients' outcomes but also contribute to the nation," Chin said in his speech at a ceremony to announce the collaboration.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad officiated at the event held at DSH 2 Bukit Lanjan, Kuala Lumpur.

Present were Johor Corp Bhd president and chief executive officer Datuk Syed Mohamed Syed Ibrahim, Mayo Clinic international practice and Asia-Pacific executive medical director Dr Stacey Rizza and KPJ Healthcare chairman Datuk Md Arif Mahmood.

In his speech, Dr Dzulkefly said heart disease continued to be the foremost cause of mortality in Malaysia, making up 18.4% of medically certified deaths in 2022, based on the report by the Department of Statistics Malaysia.

"The emergence of heart attacks among younger individuals today, compared to five years ago, is a concerning trend.

"Similarly, the rising number of deaths attributed to lung disease among Malaysia's youth is equally worrisome.

"The burden of both these diseases weighs heavily on our nation, necessitating innovative approaches and cutting-edge solutions to combat this pervasive health threat," he said.

Dr Dzulkefly said statistics revealed a pressing need for advancements in oncology treatment within our borders.

"Based on the Malaysian National Cancer Registry report, a total of 168,822 new cancer cases were reported over a period of five years from 2017 to 2021, underscoring the urgency of enhancing oncology services and infrastructure to meet the growing demand for cancer care.

"By forging strategic alliances with globally esteemed institutions such as Mayo Clinic, KPJ Healthcare is not merely following a trajectory but actively leading the charge towards transformative change," he added.

Dr Dzulkefly said by joining forces with Mayo Clinic, KPJ Healthcare would leverage on its expertise and knowledge in the fields of cardiology, respiratory and oncology to build and spearhead centres of excellence in these areas, thus uplifting KPJ's clinical excellence to international best practices.

Membership in the Mayo Clinic Care Network provides both KPJ DSH and DSH 2 access to advanced Mayo Clinic clinical tools and services, including point-of-care AskMayoExpert, eboards and healthcare consulting.

"DSH and DSH2 were selected as the first Mayo Clinic Care Network members in Malaysia by demonstrating a commitment to the highest quality, patient-centred care," said Dr Rizza.

"For patients, this means being able to receive an even higher level of world-class care, close to home, right here in Malaysia."

Dr Dzulkefly (centre) at the ceremony to unveil the strategic collaboration between KPJ Healthcare and Mayo Clinic with (from left) Syed Mohamed, Chin, Dr Rizza and Md Arif. — LOW LAY PHON/The Star

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

# Wrong smoke signal

## How to encourage smoking

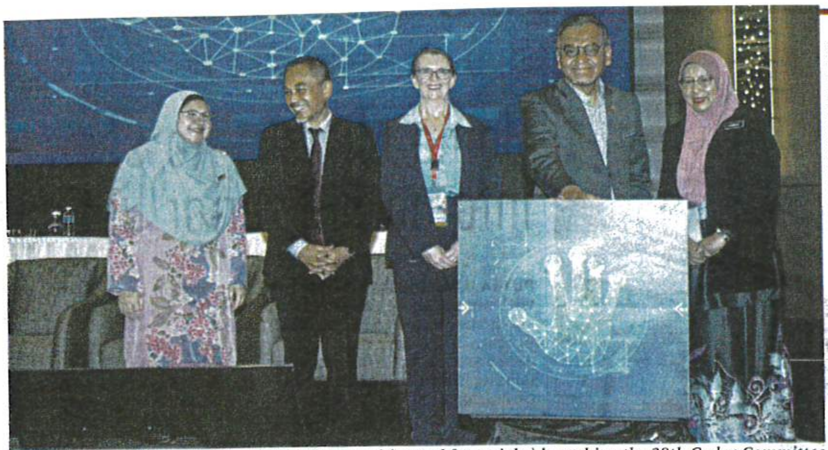
MALAYSIANS' hope of seeing smoke-free restaurants and eateries may be going up in smoke. And so may be the dream of a smoke-free Malaysia. The Health Ministry is considering giving smokers more space. To be fair, the move is merely at an idea stage. The ministry wants to listen to everyone. But still it is a threatening idea to non-smokers. Experts interviewed by this newspaper say the idea is a sign of a "U-turn". We won't go that far, but the idea of creating more space for smokers in public areas does send a wrong signal to smokers, some of whom would have quit smoking but for the announcement on Saturday. What is worse, non-smokers may even be encouraged to take up smoking as Malaysia becomes smoker-friendly again. We laud the government for wanting to hear everyone out, but what is good for smokers will never be good for non-smokers when it comes to public space. The latter know a smoke-free Malaysia is some distance away, but they want the government to take small but sure steps to get there.

Decades of hard work on getting people to quit smoking may be wasted if the government does decide to give more space to smokers. The Health Ministry should have visited restaurants and eateries around the country where smokers continue to puff away despite notices screaming of hefty fines. Lack of enforcement breeds impunity. The Health Ministry must know that smoking is not only dangerous to smokers, but also to non-smokers. What is more, the public health bill of smoking-related illnesses is a growing annual headache for the Treasury. With the exception of secondary smokers, smokers bring the diseases onto themselves. They have chosen to smoke and, as such, they must pay the price. The Health Ministry must find a way to make them pay for it, not appease their bad habit by making the non-smokers pay.

> *The right must be beneficial, and not one as detrimental as smoking.*

As for choice, the Health Ministry seems to be fearful of trampling on the constitutional rights of smokers. This was one of the reasons why an end was put to the tobacco generational endgame. We say this fear is unwarranted. And legally misplaced, too. Two reasons will do. One, the Federal Constitution has no such express provision. Such a right must be argued. There is no precedent for such an argument. Two, even if we grant the argument, it can be argued away by a stronger counter-argument. There are 34 million people in Malaysia, of whom only 4.9 million are smokers. If we want to grant the constitutional rights argument to smokers, then surely 29.1 million non-smokers have a greater right to be free from smoke. We are not saying that the majority will always win in the courts. There may be circumstances where the court will grant such a right. This is not one of them. The right must be beneficial, and not one as detrimental as smoking. It is indisputable that smoking is detrimental to the health of smokers. It is equally detrimental to the health of non-smokers. Finally, it is detrimental to the coffers of the government. The Treasury may be happy to receive billions in tax revenues from tobacco sales, but it loses twice that to just three smoking-related illnesses — lung cancer, heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Penny in, pound out never did any governments any good.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 3
RUANGAN : NEWS/NATION



*Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (second from right) launching the 28th Codex Committee for Fats and Oils meeting in Kuala Lumpur, yesterday. With him are (from left) National Institute of Health Deputy Director-General (Research & Technical Support) Datuk Dr Nor Fariza Ngah, Health Director-General Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan, Codex secretary Dr Sarah Cahill and Health Ministry Food Safety and Quality Division senior director Norrani Eksan.* PIC BY AZIAH AZMEE

BEST SOLUTION SOUGHT

# 'ALL VIEWS ON SMOKING ZONES WILL BE STUDIED'

Health minister says proposal came after meeting with 30 premises owners and traders in Jalan Alor, KL

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THE Health Ministry is willing to listen to all views regarding the issue of designated smoking zones, including at eateries, said Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad yesterday.

This will help the government get with the best solution for everyone before it is taken to the cabinet.

"(The suggestion to allow certain eateries to have designated smoking areas) was just our viewpoint after hearing recommendations from 30 owners of premises and traders in Jalan Alor.

"However, if it is rejected, then we will listen and look at the practical aspect of it.

"We will not make any U-turns (on smoking ban in eateries)."

Dr Dzulkefly said this after launching the 28th Codex Committee for Fats and Oils meeting.

It was reported that the ministry was considering allowing designated smoking areas near eateries located in "tight spaces".

This was because it was hard for smokers to find spots to smoke, as under the law that came into force on Jan 1, 2020, they must be at least 3m from an eatery.

Failure to adhere to the ruling would see offenders fined up to RM10,000 or jailed up to two years.

Detailing the reasoning for the proposal for designated smoking areas, Dr Dzulkefly said it was for better enforcement of anti-smoking laws.

"In Jalan Alor, I saw that it was almost impossible to enforce the 3m no-smoking zone.

"So we are considering designated smoking areas for a certain number of hours and with strict conditions attached."

While the idea earned mixed reactions from food outlet operators, health experts decried the ministry's suggestion, saying that it would send the wrong message to the public.

# CAP: Ministry proposal not a step backwards

**GEORGE TOWN:** The Health Ministry's proposal to provide designated smoking areas outside dining premises, especially for those located in tight places, is not a backward step, said the Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP).

The move, said CAP anti-smoking activist and education officer N.N. Subbarow, was to protect non-smokers, who are the majority in Malaysia, especially the elderly, pregnant women, children and those at risk from smoke or vapour from smoking products, including electronic cigarettes or vaping.

*This is also proof that the ministry listens to the complaints of the community...*

**N.N. SUBBAROW**
Consumers' Association of Penang anti-smoking education officer

"CAP wants to emphasise that the provision of this designated smoking area must be in line with Article 8 of the World Health Organisation Framework Convention for Tobacco Control, which is 'Protecting non-smokers from the dangers of cigarette smoke or other smoking products'.

"CAP also wants to remind people that the smoking ban under Regulation 11(1) of the Tobacco Products Control Regulations 2004 applies only to smokers, who are a minority in Malaysia which is 21.3 per cent.

"They are free to smoke anywhere other than the 23 places gazetted under the regulations," said Subbarow.

It was reported that the ministry would consider providing designated smoking areas outside dining premises, especially for those located in tight spaces.

Yesterday, Dr Dzulkefly said the ministry was willing to listen to the views of all regarding the proposed designated smoking zones, including at eateries.

He said this was to enable the government to come up with the best solution for everyone before it was taken to the cabinet.

Subbarow said the Clean, Smoke-Free Premises Walkabout Programme (BeBAs) was an effort by the ministry to reach out to the people through engagement and community empowerment together with food premises owners in Jalan Alor, Bukit Bintang.

This effort, he said, should be the main focus to ensure that the level of safety and quality of food in dining establishments was in good condition and smoke-free.

"This is also proof that the ministry listens to the complaints of the community, including visitors to food premises, traders and community leaders."

BeBAs educates the community about the ban on smoking in eating places and also the proposal to provide a special area for smoking, which exists in Jalan Kampong Kolam, George Town.

With community empowerment and sustainable enforcement, this area for smokers will not be filled by minors and, at the same time, cultivate the practice of not smoking in the community.

"Community support and togetherness are necessary to create more comfortable, beautiful and clean food premises, as well as to create a smoke-free country by 2040.

"Smokers also need to be helped to quit smoking through treatment in clinics or by visiting www.jomquit.com."

# National Cancer Society backs smoking-area plan

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The National Cancer Society of Malaysia (NCSM) has backed the Health Ministry's plan to allow designated smoking areas to be set up near eateries located in tight spaces.

"This plan is a good progression of a wider move to create more smoke-free areas in public locations, and should be supported," said NCSM managing director Associate Professor Dr Murallitharan M. in a statement.

He said there was confusion between the terms "smoke-free premises" and "smoke-free areas", which were often used interchangeably.

"Smoke-free premises" refers to establishments where no smoking is allowed.

"For eating establishments, in particular, this extends not only to the specific establishment but also within a 3m radius of the establishment. Outside this 3m radius, people can smoke," said Dr Murallitharan.

"Smoke-free area" refer to an area gazetted under the law where smoking is prohibited, such as parks and attractions like Jonker Walk in Melaka.

Murallitharan said the Health Ministry's proposal involved allowing designated smoking areas that were not within smoke-free areas, but in places with smoke-free premises.

He said the benefit of this plan was that there was assurance that there would be no changes to smoke-free areas, which will remain off-limits to smokers.

"Over the long run, spaces with smoke-free premises will be transformed into smoke-free areas as more and more people stop using even these designated smoking areas."

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : NEWS/NATION

RISING FROM 6 TO 8 PER CENT

# NO SST ON TCM PRODUCTS, SERVICES

Move in line with efforts to improve people's wellbeing, says Finance Ministry

*Practitioners registered under the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Act 2016 (Act 775) will not be required to register with the Customs Department.* PIC BY HAZREEN MOHAMAD

KUALA LUMPUR

THE government will not impose the Sales and Service Tax on traditional and complementary medicine (TCM) products and services.

The Finance Ministry said the decision was made after taking into account feedback from stakeholders and TCM practitioners.

It said practitioners registered under the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Act 2016 (Act 775) would not be required to register with the Customs Department.

Starting from March 1, the government will increase the SST from six per cent to eight, except for food and beverages, and telecommunication products.

"TCM covers Malay, Chinese, and Indian traditional medicine, as well as homeopathy, chiropractic care, osteopathy and Islamic medicine.

"The Finance Ministry has agreed that the decision also applies to services provided by health or wellness centres, massage parlours or similar establishments operated by registered TCM practitioners under Act 775, effective March 1."

Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan said the exemption was in line with the government's efforts to improve the wellbeing of the people under the Madani Economy Framework.

"The decision, which was approved by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who is finance minister, is a step towards improving people's wellbeing.

"The framework will strengthen the TCM sector, which employs almost half of the healthcare workforce in Malaysia. The government acknowledges that there is a long way to go to expand the local TCM sector internationally.

"So entrepreneurs need to rely on domestic demand to sustain their business, especially for TCM that provides services to Malaysians," he said.

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AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 16
RUANGAN : LETTERS

HEALTHCARE NEEDS

# Seremban badly in need of a new hospital

**RECENTLY,** I visited my brother who was warded at Tuanku Ja'afar Hospital (HTJ) in Seremban.

The 4B accident wards were crammed with patients.

Such an environment severely degrades the quality of care provided by medical officers, who strive to provide the best despite being overworked.

Two other significant problems at HTJ include the lack of a specialist clinic and consultation rooms, and a lack of adequate parking. An additional multi-storey parking facility would ease congestion.

But, I feel such additions to HTJ will alleviate the problems for only two to three years before they recur.

With the city's 600,000 population growing exponentially, why not invest in a new state-of-the-art hospital?

In addition, many patients are from the B40 and M40 groups who are financially stricken. Surely the government can do better for these citizens?

The federal and state governments must give this idea due consideration as more people from greater Kuala Lumpur are now residing here and buying properties in Seremban 2, Sendayan and Nilai.

I recall from a talk I attended in 2018, that there were plans for a new support hospital in Bandar Enstek, Nilai. I'm sure Seremban folk hope that this plan becomes a reality together with other improvements.

**C. SATHASIVAM SITHERAVELLU**
Seremban, Negri Sembilan