

Govt to compensate those having serious side effects from Covid-19 jab

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Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said details of the compensation scheme would be released soon. (Reuters pic)

SEPANG: Those who experience serious side effects after receiving the Covid-19 vaccination will be given ex-gratia payments under a government compensation scheme.

Science, technology and innovation minister Khairy Jamaluddin said the Cabinet had agreed to set up the protection scheme last week.

"This is meant for those who experience direct side effects which are serious after the administration of the Covid-19 vaccine," he told reporters after receiving the first batch of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine today.

However, Khairy did not disclose specific details such as the amount of payment or details of the side effects but added they will be announced soon.

The Covid-19 vaccine protection scheme is similar to Singapore's vaccine injury financial assistance programme, which gives out financial assistance to those who experience serious side

effects.

Under this plan, Singapore will pay up to a maximum of SG\$225000 (RM685,000) to those who die or suffer severe disability arising from the jabs.

Khairy said that Malaysia will be administering two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, instead of just one.

He noted that there were reports on research carried out in other countries that showed one dose of Pfizer has a 85% effectivity rate against the virus.

"However, we did not carry out such a study. We will maintain the two doses, with the second one being given within 21 days," Khairy said.

To a question on the status of approval for the Sinovac, Sputnik V and AstraZeneca vaccines, Khairy said the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA) was looking into this.

"For Sputnik V, NPRA has asked for additional information from the manufacturer. I can assure you that the NPRA is doing its best to expedite the purchase.

"As for Sinovac, we are expected to receive the vaccine on Feb 27 but it is still pending NPRA's approval."

As for AstraZeneca, Khairy said the vaccines are scheduled to be delivered in March but the government is awaiting the green light from NPRA.

Meanwhile, Bernama reported health minister Dr Adham Baba as saying that the government planned to issue Covid-19 passports as verification for individuals who have received the vaccine.

"We are proposing two ways of doing it — have the proof of vaccination displayed in the MySejahtera app or maintain the proof in physical form, which is a passport that can be accepted by other countries," he said.

Speaking at a press conference after the arrival of the first batch of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine here today, Adham said the health ministry and the science, technology and innovation ministry was in the midst of refining the plan.

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