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Khairy says will discuss Home Ministry's plans to detain undocumented migrants during lockdown with Hamzah

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BY YISWAREE PALANSAMY

IN MALAYSIA



Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation Khairy Jamaluddin during a visit to vaccination centre at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre in Kuala Lumpur May 30, 2021. — Picture by Firdaus Latif

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KUALA LUMPUR, May 30 — Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Khairy Jamaluddin today said that he will be discussing with Home Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin the latter's recent announcement on rounding up immigrants during the two-week total lockdown which will begin on June 1.

In a press conference today, the coordinating minister for the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme (NIP) said, "We are going to submit a joint paper between the Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry (Mosti) and the Home Ministry soon on how we approach the vaccination programme for undocumented migrants.

"So notwithstanding the announcement yesterday, I will be discussing with home minister on what the government should give priority,

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Free Malaysia Today had yesterday reported Hamzah as saying that the Immigration Department (JIM) would be conducting operations to detain undocumented migrants during the two-week lockdown.

He reportedly said that the department would be holding these operations with the National Registration Department (NRD) and the police, adding that the Prisons Department is also ready to allocate additional detention centres for detainees.

"It's true that last time our prisons had reached beyond their capacity. But now we're ready. We have satellite prisons and detention centres prepared.

"It has already been a year after the various SOPs and phases of movement control orders (MCOs).

"If still there are people who are stubborn, I mean foreigners, we will detain them," he was quoted saying.

Khairy had, in February, gave his assurance that the government would not detain any undocumented worker willing to undergo the inoculation scheme.

He added that the Covid-19 task force will work with the Home Ministry to contact foreign embassies, international organisations, civil society and non-governmental organisations to help inform the migrant community of this leeway.

In April, Khairy said that refugees and migrant workers will be included for vaccination in the third phase of the national inoculation drive.

In a joint press conference with Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba in Putrajaya, Khairy said that the shots will be administered even to those who do not have legitimate documents, or if they have expired.

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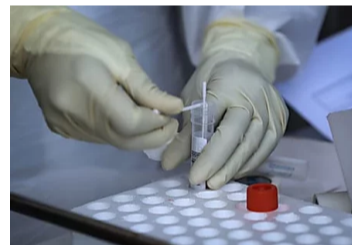
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