

Khairy: Our inoculation rate well ahead of most neighbours, don't compare Malaysia with vaccine hoarders



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NATION

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PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia's Covid-19 immunisation rate should not be compared to European Union countries who have "hoarded" vaccines, says Khairy Jamaluddin.

The coordinating minister for the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme said Malaysia's vaccination rate relies on supply, and it is at a disadvantage compared with more influential countries.

"When comparing us with countries like Hungary, are you aware that it is part of the European Union?"

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"Many vaccine factories are also located in Europe. So they are able to hoard the supply much earlier.

"Meanwhile countries in Asia, including Japan which is a very developed nation, are well behind in their vaccination rate compared to Europe, the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

"Why not look at our neighbouring countries? Our immunisation rate is well ahead of Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, and we are closing in on Japan.

"Our government's focus is to reach a high vaccination rate and we are working to get there," he said in response to a question as to why Malaysia's vaccination rate appeared slow while countries like Hungary are well ahead and able to organise football matches with full stadiums.

Khairy pointed out that vaccine inequity is seen when countries like Britain and Canada can purchase vaccines five times more than their population size.

"Only now do you hear countries like the United States offering donations and saying 'Oh hi, Malaysia, would you like some vaccines?' Well, we have been waiting a long time," said Khairy, who is also Science, Technology and Innovation Minister.

On the current vaccination rate, Khairy said the government is targeting at least 10% of the population to be fully inoculated with both doses of vaccine by the middle of July.

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