'Target of 200,000 jabs achieved'

















By MARTIN CARVALHO

NATION

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PETALING JAYA: Rapid mass vaccination is the way out of the current economic and public health crisis, with Malaysia achieving its target of 200,000 jabs ahead of schedule, says Khairy Jamaluddin.

"Our way out of this crisis depends on our collective strength as a society to roll out a rapid immunisation plan while managing the daily new cases and surge in terms of hospital capacity," said the coordinating minister of the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme.

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"The panacea to break the painful trade-off between lives and livelihoods is, quite simply, vaccination.

"It has to be fast, efficient and available widely," he said at the virtual launch of the World Bank's latest Malaysia Economic Monitor report titled "Weathering the Surge" yesterday.

Under the National Recovery Plan, more economic and social sectors would be re-opened in stages as daily Covid-19 cases go down, intensive care unit occupancy decreases, and more of the population has been fully vaccinated.

To achieve this, Khairy said the government set a target of administering 200,000 vaccine shots a day by July.

"I'm pleased that we have reached this target ahead of schedule with 215,000 shots on June 15," he added.

As at June 19, 4.08 million people or 12.5% of the population have received at least one dose of a vaccine, he said. Out of this, 1.58 million have received the full two doses.

"We are confident of administering 11 million doses by July, 13 million doses by the end of August, and a further eight million doses in the following month," he added.

Khairy said this would mean that 60% of the population would have been vaccinated by the end of September.

To further boost the vaccination process, he said an additional 1,000 general practitioners from the private healthcare sector would begin administering vaccines by the end of this month and from July.

"There are ongoing plans to set up more vaccination centres.

"We will be bringing in retired health workers, housemen and medical students to increase manpower," he added.

On another matter, Khairy described the act of vaccine hoarding among industrialised nations as "extremely immoral" and urged the World Bank to raise the issue on behalf of developing nations.

Covax, he said, was set up in global solidarity as a mechanism to ensure vaccine equity but it has been an "abysmal failure".

"I think the World Bank owes it to developing countries to be a strong voice for vaccine equity and to remind advanced countries that the situation over the past few months has fallen short of respectable and responsible global leadership," he argued.

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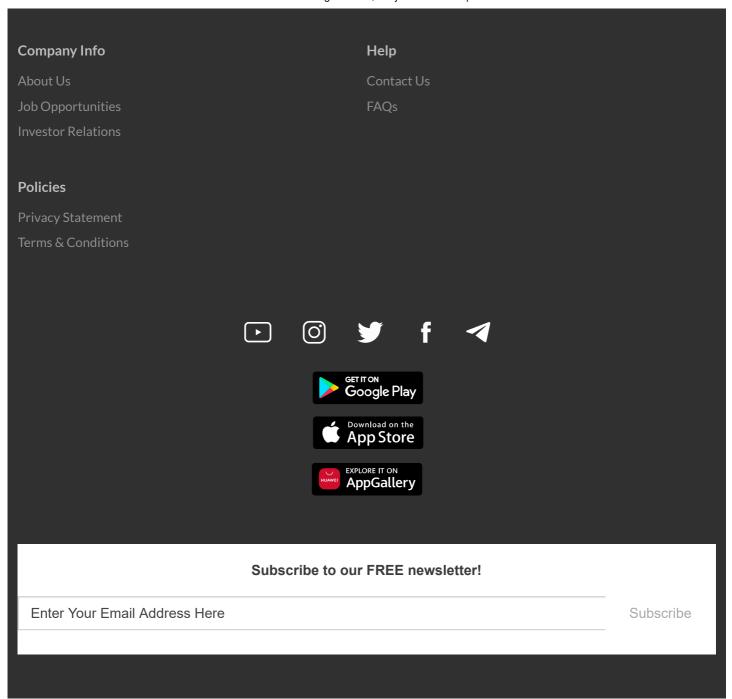
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