

Sale of Sinovac vaccine will complement national immunisation plan, says MCA



NATION 

Saturday, 24 Jul 2021 10:53 AM MYT

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PETALING JAYA: The public don't have to pay for their Covid-19 vaccine as the sale of 14 million doses of the Sinovac vaccine to state governments and the private sector isn't meant to replace the national immunisation programme, says MCA.

Wilayah MCA youth vice-chairman Chris Daniel Wong (*pic*) said the sale of the vaccine by Pharmaniage Bhd is for complementary inoculation initiatives to the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme.

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He was responding to criticism from former International Trade and Industry minister Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz about the decision to allow the sale to certain states and private entities, saying that the people should not be made to pay for “what should be free”.

"I feel the need to correct her on her misconception of how this works. The people are still getting the vaccine for free," said Wong.

"State governments' initiatives roll out their own vaccine programme to complement the Federal Government's National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme to achieve herd immunity; it was never meant to replace it," he added in a statement on Saturday (July 24).

Wong cited the example of the Selangor state government's Selvax programme, saying that it had bought millions of doses of the Sinovac vaccine through Pharmaniaga, charging RM350 for two shots.

"Just like in Selangor, other states that purchase the vaccines will be able to roll out their own vaccine programme for those who need to vaccinate their staff in a hurry (such as factory owners) and are willing to pay so they do not need to wait for the vaccines (from the national programme)," said Wong.

"The rest of rakyat in that state will still get their vaccine for free in due course," he added.

As for Rafidah calling out Pharmaniaga Bhd for a “blatant abuse of its monopoly status” for carrying out the “fill and finish” process for the Sinovac vaccine, Wong said this has already been explained before.

He said that Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Khairy Jamaluddin had explained over six months ago that undertaking the fill and finish process in Malaysia will lower the price as compared to buying the finished product such as in the case of Pfizer and AstraZeneca.

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Covid-19 , Covid-19 Vaccinations , Covid-19 Vaccines , Sinovac , Sinovac Doses , MCA , Chris Daniel Wong , Rafidah Aziz , Pharmaniaga

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