

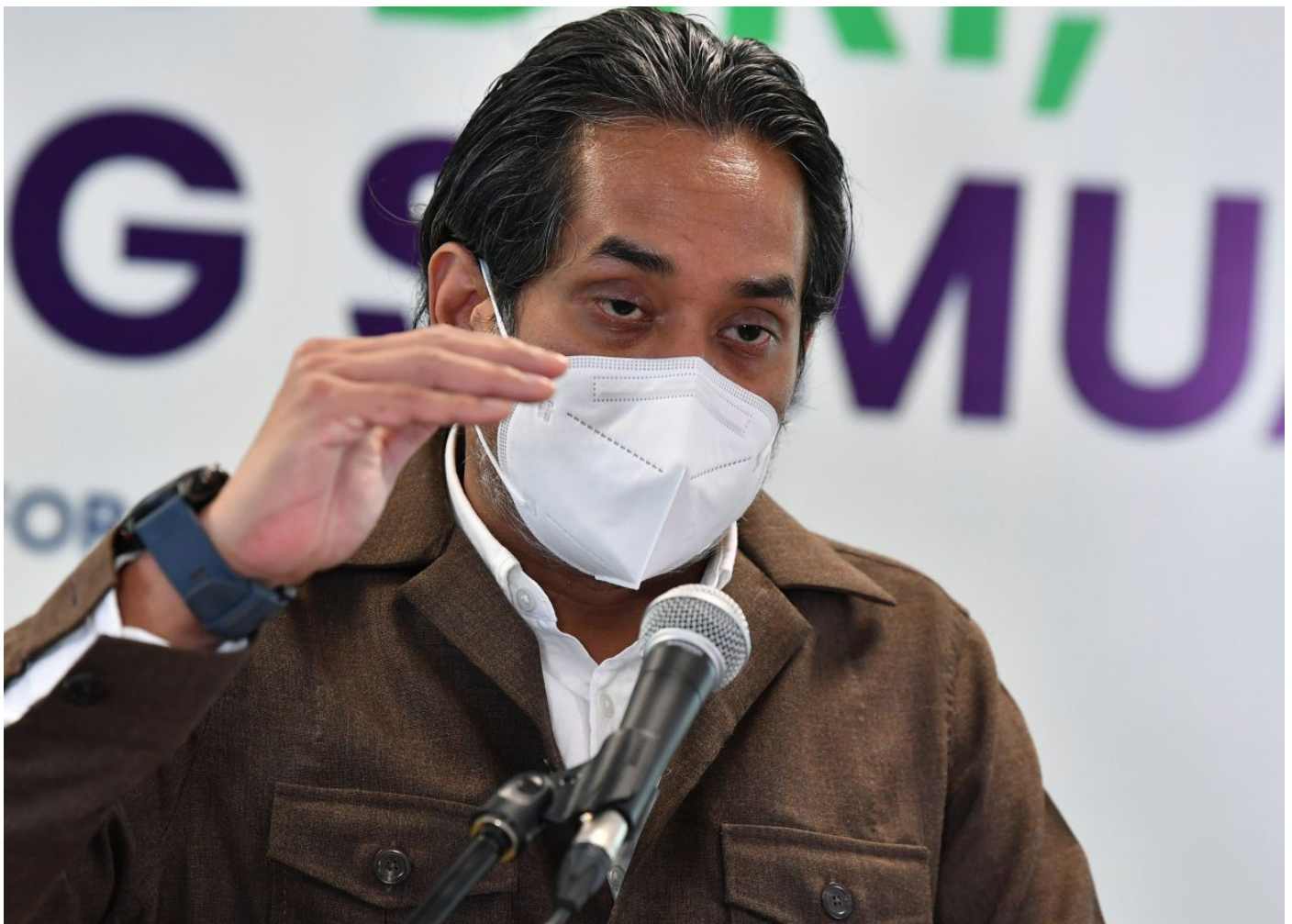
# Increased vaccination still the key to battling Covid-19, Says Khairy



By JOSEPH KAOS JR and ALLISON LAI

**NATION**

Monday, 02 Aug 2021 2:48 PM MYT



PUTRAJAYA: With global Delta variant infections of Covid-19 rising, Malaysia will have to shift its focus from reducing the number of deaths and hospitalisations to case numbers, says Khairy Jamaluddin.

The National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme coordinating minister, who was asked to comment on a study by the United States' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that suggested

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"I think we have to accept that with the rise of the Delta variant, Covid-19 will become more endemic.

"So because of that, it's a combination of vaccination and other public health measures.

"It's very important that we continue to practise non-pharmaceutical interventions like mask wearing, ventilation, physical distancing, and having good personal hygiene.

"Because we know the variant is highly transmissible and we have to ensure that even if you are vaccinated, we must continue to practise stringent SOPs (standard operating procedures).

"Moving forward, the key numbers that we need to be looking out for are the death rate and utilisation of ICU beds, and we hope this will come down.

"Those are going to be the figures that we will be concentrating on as far as the national vaccination programme is concerned," Khairy told the weekly Covid-19 Immunisation Task Force press conference on Monday (Aug 2).

Khairy said Labuan and Sarawak, which have vaccinated most of their populations, have seen a reduction in Covid-19 hospitalisation and death rates.

"In Labuan, a lot of Pfizer was used and in Sarawak, it's Sinovac. But both types of vaccines have, to some extent, managed to reduce hospitalisation and death rates.

"We hope to see this in the next few weeks in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor as well after more folks receive their second doses.

"We hope the number of admissions, deaths and ICU utilisation will come down in the Klang Valley," said Khairy.

He added that in Singapore where the Delta variant had sparked a rise in infections, most vaccinated patients mostly displayed either mild or no symptoms.

"It is very important to get vaccinated as it will still protect us from the worst outcomes of Covid-19," said Khairy.

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