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Malaysia to conduct clinical trials on cholera vaccine by year end - Dr Adham

09-16-2021 03:11 PM

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia is expected to carry out clinical trials for the cholera vaccine by the end of this year under the National Vaccine Development Roadmap.

Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba (pix) said the clinical trials will be conducted by Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in collaboration with the Asian Institute of Medicine, Science and Technology (AIMST).

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"We are lucky because our country has a framework and agreement to develop vaccines. So, (vaccine) production is not only for Covid-19 but for other vector-borne, airborne diseases and so on," he said.

"... And there might be other vaccines too such as for psoriasis and also the vaccines that we are trying to work on, namely for polio and dengue," he said at a press conference after officiating the pre-launch ceremony of Area 57 Research and Development centre at Taman Teknologi Malaysia (TPM), today.

Dr Adham said these vaccines would be developed within the time frame stipulated in the National Vaccine Development Roadmap, adding it would take time as there are no shortcuts to produce them.

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He said the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority will only provide approval on new vaccines based on three principles, namely effectiveness, safety and quality.

In today's programme, Dr Adham said Area 57 is a centre of excellence for research and development as well as talent empowerment developed by TPM to advance the development of industries focusing on the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS).

He said Area 57 is a five-acre area that will be turned into an integrated infrastructure and sandbox with the provision of seven proposed values namely to carry out research, development, testing, certification, commercialisation and maintenance of drone solutions and technology.

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The centre is an additional test site under the National Technology and Innovation Sandbox (NTIS), he said, adding that other test sites are located at Felda Mempaga Pahang, Iskandar Drone Zone and Robotics (DRZ Iskandar) and in Cyberjaya.

It is the first one-stop centre for UAV and UAS innovations in central Malaysia, he added.

Meanwhile, TPM in a statement said through Area 57 services via drones could be expanded and enhanced in various sectors such as e-commerce, logistics for the delivery of essential supplies or medicine to rural or remote areas, or areas affected by natural disasters apart from being used in carrying maintenance work for smart buildings, smart cities, maritime and urban agriculture.

TPM will work with other agencies among others the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia, Department of Survey and Mapping Malaysia, Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission and SIRIM Bhd to facilitate the development of the drone industry in terms of certification, frequency approval, camera approval, as well as safety approval for operating drones, read the statement.- *Bernama*

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