

Setting up of Malaysian Institute of Genomes and Vaccines timely, say researchers



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by BERNAMA / pic by TMR FILE

KUALA LUMPUR – Malaysia needs more experts in the field of vaccines because the country has the capability to produce its own vaccines, said the Alliance for Safe Community chairman Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye.

He said since implementation of the Ninth Malaysia Plan (9MP) to the 12MP, there were about 40 vaccine development projects approved by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI).

However, until now, the country had yet to produce homemade vaccines, but still relied on sources from other countries.

“Malaysia has experts who can produce vaccines but we need more experts in the field of vaccines, so talent development also needs to be emphasised. I hope more young people are nurtured with interest to become vaccine scientists,” he said in a statement here today.

He welcome the move by Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba to table a proposal to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob on the setting up of an institute to produce Malaysian-made COVID-19 vaccine.

The proposed establishment of the institute, to be known as the Malaysian Institute of Genomes and Vaccines, would facilitate the government to coordinate development and research (R&D) activities related to genomes and vaccines, well as mobilise relevant experts more efficiently, he added.

Lee said apart from developing COVID-19-related vaccines, the institute could also conduct R&D in the production of vaccines for other dangerous diseases such as cancer, dengue, cholera and leptospirosis.

This would require cooperation involving expertise from various stakeholders such as ministries, agencies, institutes, the private sector and the Civil Society Organisation (CSO), he added.