

BERITA ONLINE

MALAY MAIL

TARIKH: 9 MEI 2022 (ISNIN)



Mosti: RM15m in additional funds for third phase of SARS-CoV-2 genomic surveillance project

Monday, 09 May 2022 08:16 PM MYT



It said in a statement today that the SARS-CoV-2 genomic surveillance project was very important and strategic to identify and monitor SARS-CoV-2 virus variants in Malaysia, especially variants of concern (VOC) such as Omicron and Delta. — selimaksan / iStock.com pic via AFP

PUTRAJAYA, May 9 — An additional fund of RM15 million under the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme (PICK) has been approved for the third phase of the SARS-CoV-2 genomic surveillance project, said the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Mosti).

It said in a statement today that the SARS-CoV-2 genomic surveillance project was very important and strategic to identify and monitor SARS-CoV-2 virus variants in Malaysia, especially variants of concern (VOC) such as Omicron and Delta.

The first phase was conducted from September 1, 2021 to March 2022 while the second phase from March to September 2022.

According to Mosti, Malaysia had conducted the SARS-CoV-2 virus genome sequencing on 15,565 samples between September 1, 2021 and April 27, 2022 to identify major Covid-19 variants in the country.

The genome sequencing was carried out by laboratories under Mosti, the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) through the SARS-CoV-2 genomic surveillance project, it said.

“Of the total samples, 7,245 samples or 46.55 per cent were identified as Delta variants; 6,374 samples or 40.95 per cent were Omicron; Beta (283 samples or 1.82 per cent), Alpha (33 samples or 0.21 per cent) and the rest were other variants.

“These samples were selected by the MOH and taken from all states in Malaysia. The genomic information of the SARS-CoV-2 virus has been uploaded onto the Global Initiative on Sharing Avian Influenza Data (GISAID) database,” it said.

Mosti said a consortium of 11 laboratories coordinated by the Malaysia Genome Institute-National Institutes of Biotechnology Malaysia (MGVI-NIBM) aimed to sequence an additional 15,000 SARS-CoV-2 virus genomes.

The consortium of 11 laboratories consists of MGVI-NIBM under Mosti, the Institute for Medical Research (IMR) under MOH and nine laboratories under MOHE including Institute of Health and Community Medicine from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Universiti Sains Malaysia Hospital, Universiti Putra Malaysia Teaching Hospital and Universiti Malaysia Sabah Biotechnology Research Institute.

“The genomic Information of the SARS-CoV-2 variants is very important for the government to take appropriate and specific action to control and curb the spread of related variants.

“Currently, the genomic surveillance rate for our country is still less than one per cent, however Phase 3 is part of the positive efforts to achieve at least one per cent genomic surveillance rate as targeted by the government,” it said. — Bernama