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Cabinet orders EPU to report on check-up issue

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KUANTAN, Sun. - The Cabinet has instructed the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department to prepare a report on the different points of view between the Malaysian Medical Association and the Foreign Workers Medical Examination Monitoring Agency on the medical check-up system which is described to be a burden.

Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng said the report would be submitted to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

No deadline has been set.

"The EPU was asked to come up with the report after I briefed them on the differences in the points of view between the MMA and Fomema regarding medical check-ups for foreign workers.

"MMA president Dr Milton Lam and Fomema managing director Dr Mohamed Haniffah Abdullah had earlier briefed me on the points of disagreement," he told reporters after visiting the Tengku Ampuan Afzan Hospital.

Dr Lam had before this urged private doctors not to register under Fomema due to the high registration fees imposed if they wanted to be part of the consortium.

He had also expressed dissatisfaction over the RM220 and RM210 charged on female and male foreign workers respectively for their medical examination.

Fomema, a consortium comprising the Malaysia Doctors Co-operative and Anjur Dinamik Sdn Bhd, signed an agreement with the Government for a 15-year concession to conduct medical examinations on foreign workers.

Through this programme, foreign workers who wish to undergo medical examination will be able to do so at Fomema's panel of clinics.

Chua said the government was looking into all the points of disagreement between the two parties.

"Our main concern is the interest of the population, and we realise that we do not have an effective system now to control infectious diseases," he said.

Chua said yellow fever, a dangerous disease which could kill, was one example of such diseases which could be passed on to the local people.

"We are also planning to set up an effective monitoring system, in the interest of the public to prevent the spread of diseases among foreign workers.

"The most important thing now is to prevent the infectious diseases brought in by foreign workers from spreading to the local community."

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