

'B.1.351 variant caused re-infection in patient who got Covid-19 last year'

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The Covid-19 B.1.351 variant which was first detected in South Africa had caused a case of re-infection in Malaysia, said Health Ministry director-general Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah.

He said the patient had first been infected by Covid-19 in April last year and later recovered.

"Maybe (the first infection) was a different variant. But this time the patient was infected with the South African variant," he said at a press conference in Putrajaya this evening.

He said the patient was treated at the Tuanku Jaafar Hospital in Seremban.

He later said there were two other cases of re-infection, being treated at the Sungai Buloh Hospital, but did not state which variants cause the second infection.

Noor Hisham said the B.1.351 variant was already prevalent in the community, with 48 local cases detected thus far.

Of the 48, two have died.

The AstraZeneca vaccine fares poorly against the B.1.351 variant.

However, the Pfizer vaccine has been shown to be effective in protecting against the variant.

Noor Hisham said there had been three local cases with the B.1.1.7 variant, which was first detected in the UK.

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