

M'sia developing mRNA Covid-19 vaccine – Adham

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Malaysia is developing a Covid-19 vaccine using the messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) technology.

The Malaysian Institute for Medical Research (IMR) started developing it with Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in November 2020, said Health Minister Dr Adham Baba in a joint press conference with National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme coordinating minister Khairy Jamaluddin, today.

“The original SARS-CoV-2 virus and variants are now in the cloning stage,” he said about the current status of vaccine development.

He said that the process includes testing in small and big animals (pre-clinical stage), then three phases of clinical trials in humans, before the vaccine can be registered and mass produced.

With regards to healthcare workers reinfected with the virus after receiving two vaccine shots, Adham said that there were 1,480 cases with a single category-4 case suffering from pneumonia and requiring respiratory support.

He said that the majority of cases were in category 1 or 2, and suffered no symptoms or symptoms sans pneumonia.

“This shows that the vaccines protect people against serious symptoms. The data also shows its effectiveness in healthcare workers,” he said.

Adham said that genomic surveillance efforts have now identified 183 Covid-19 variants, with 167 being variants of concern (VOC) and 16 variants of interest (VOI).

“Therefore, surveillance will continue for the next three months,” he said.

- Bernama

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