

Govt told to relist nicotine gels, liquids under Poisons Act immediately

By **AMALIA AZMI** - November 7, 2023 @ 12:52pm



Malaysian Medical Association president, Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz. -FILE PIC

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has demanded the government to immediately relist nicotine gels and liquids as controlled substances under the Poisons Act 1952.

This comes after the government's recent decision to decouple the Generational End Game (GEG) bill from the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Bill 2023.

Its president, Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz expressed her disappointment over the government's handling of this matter, emphasising that smoking and vaping are public health concerns.

Dr Azizan highlighted the need for the Health Ministry to take the lead in ensuring the bill's speedy passage, given the significance of the matter.

"Did they only decide that the GEG is 'unconstitutional' and should be separated from the bill as of last week? The government had months to extensively study all angles concerning the bill.

"This bill has been deliberated on from the time of the previous government to the current government.

"Any ministry, before the tabling of such an important bill in parliament, would have consulted their legal team or even the Attorney General's Chambers (AGC) for their views and advice," she said in a statement last night.

She questioned the timing of the government's claim that the GEG is 'unconstitutional' particularly as the bill's second reading was scheduled to be tabled on Oct 10.

"MOH must take the responsible step of immediately re-listing nicotine gels and liquids under the Poisons Act or risk eroding public trust.

"The MOH and by extension, the government have ignored expert advice, warning them of the consequences of removing nicotine gels and liquids from the Poisons Act.

"As a result of its decision (to delist nicotine from the Poisons Act), e-cigarette and vaping products, including those with nicotine, can be legally sold to children of any age," the statement read.

Meanwhile, she also urged parents of children under 18 who have suffered health issues due to e-cigarettes or vaping products to consider legal action against the government for failing to adequately protect citizens, especially young children, from the dangers of vaping.

"The MMA has strongly opposed the government's decision to delist nicotine gels and liquids from the Poisons Act and calls on the Malaysian public to hold the government accountable for every e-cigarette or vaping use-associated lung injury case among minors," she added.