

# Contract doctors disappointed, many may consider migrating



By [Salleh Buang](#) - November 15, 2021 @ 12:15am

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NSTP file pic

" THE way we treated our doctors is so shameful." Those were the words of an old friend who came to my place recently upon hearing that my entire neighbourhood had been affected by the *air pasang besar*.

Thankfully, my house is situated on slightly higher ground and was, therefore, safe from the floodwater.

My friend was particularly upset because so many of these doctors were the frontliners in our war against the Covid-19 pandemic.

In late August, the Southeast Asia Globe news portal stated that many of these contract doctors had suffered financial instability and burnout since 2016.

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With the arrival of Covid-19 to our shores, many were pushed to the brink, finally leading to their recent "Hartal Strike".

Many of us must have seen the image of a young contract doctor, dressed in black, holding a placard during the strike outside Sungai Buloh Hospital in Selangor in late July.

The placard read "Equal Pay, Equal Rights, Equal Opportunity", and below it (in smaller letters) "#Hartal Doktor Kontrak".

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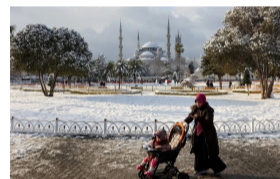
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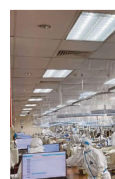
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However, some may consider going into private practice before deciding to do so.

"The issue is not about money. It is the government's failure to respect its contract doctors," said contract doctor MJ, who intends to migrate to Australia.

Disappointed with the Budget, the contract doctors say they may hold another strike next month.

"We feel so used.

"The government is not serious about helping us and it is only using us for the pandemic," said Dr Mustapha.

**The writer was a federal counsel at the Attorney-General's Chambers and visiting professor at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. He is now a full-time consultant, trainer and author**

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