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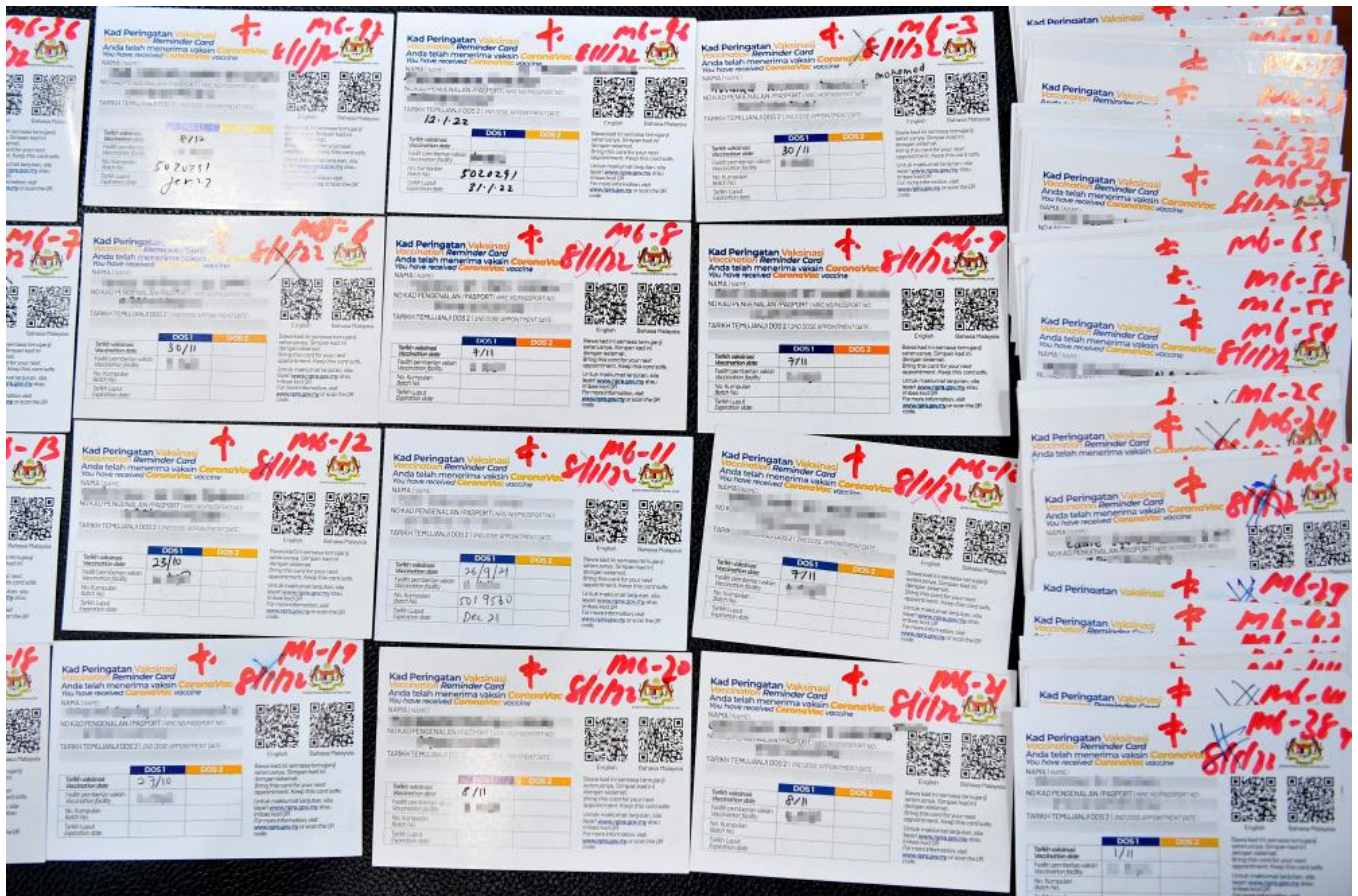
Infection risks from anti-vaxxers

Rajvinder Singh

01-13-2022 07:18 AM

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Unvaccinated individuals pose a health risk to others, especially when mingling in public while using a fake vaccination certificate. – BERNAMAPIX

PETALING JAYA: One of the main challenges of the Covid-19 vaccination campaign is to get anti-vaxxers to see the folly of their ways.

According to health expert Azrul Mohd Khalib, such individuals have made up their minds and it is difficult to convince them otherwise.

To compound matters, some doctors assist anti-vaxxers to fool the authorities.

“They are putting people’s lives at risk,” said Azrul, who is Galen Centre for Health and Social Policy chief executive officer.

It was reported last Saturday that a 51-year-old doctor, who declared that he objected

to the Covid inoculation drive, was arrested on suspicion of selling fake vaccination certificates.

Initial investigations revealed that the doctor, who has a clinic in Marang, had dealings with about 1,900 individuals but it is still unclear how many had bought the fake documents.

According to Terengganu police chief Datuk Rohaimi Md Isa, the doctor was charging RM400 to RM600 for each certificate.

He said there was a possibility that people from other states also purchased the fake certificates from the doctor.

"His clinic is one of those designated as a vaccination centre, but he was issuing certificates even to those who declined to take the jabs," Rohaimi said.

Terengganu Health Department director Datuk Dr Kasemani Embong said the private clinic had been allowed to administer Covid-19 vaccinations for a fee since September last year.

Azrul added that those who have vaccination certificates without having taken the jab are not only putting the health of their families at risk, but also endangering the community.

"The doctor claims that he is an anti-vaxxer but he is just using it as an excuse to provide fake certificates while raking in a huge profit."

Azrul said the problem with anti-vaxxers is that they refuse to listen to reason or consider data and evidence that have proven the efficacy of the Covid-19 vaccine.

"Reasoning with them is difficult because they have made up their minds."

Azrul said it should not come as a surprise that there are a number of people in the healthcare profession who are anti-vaxxers.

"But just because they do not want to be vaccinated does not mean that they should also trade in fake certificates "



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to ensure that all Malaysians get vaccinated.

The Health Ministry recently reported that 14% of the 122 Omicron cases among *umrah* pilgrims did not have any vaccination records.

"We should not allow this to happen again," said Azrul.

Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Koh Kar Chai expressed dismay at the news of fake vaccination certificates being sold.

"We urge the authorities to conduct an investigation and bring those responsible to book."

Koh said the public should also alert the authorities if they come across any corrupt activities in the healthcare sector.

"MMA does not condone activities that (threaten) the integrity of the medical profession, more so when it causes harm to people's health."

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