

Throw the book at them, MMA says on fake vax certs culprits

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The Malaysian Medical Association said it will not allow a few black sheep to tarnish the good name and reputation of the medical profession. (Bernama pic)

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has backed calls for the authorities to impose the full force of the law against those issuing and selling fake Covid-19 vaccination certificates.

Over the past two weeks, there have been numerous arrests made in different parts of the country involving those hawking fake certificates. In Selangor alone, it is believed that at least 5,600 had been sold.

MMA president Dr Koh Kar Chai urged law enforcers to go all out in weeding out the offenders and said it will be filing a police report of their own based on a complaint it received recently.

"We want all those who are involved to be brought to justice and face the full force of the law. The heaviest punishments should be meted out as it is a serious offence that could put countless lives in danger.

"We will not allow a few black sheep to tarnish the good name and reputation of the profession," he said in a statement today, referring to doctors who were arrested over the offence.

"MMA will support the sternest action taken against any medical practitioner found to be involved in such irresponsible and criminal acts."

He said that any doctor found guilty can have their practising licence revoked by the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC), adding that the health ministry should also close their clinics.

MMA's comments echo those made by senior defence minister Hishammuddin Hussein a week ago, who called for the maximum punishment available to be imposed on those found guilty.

"This is something that is hard for me to accept and forgive because it affects the safety and health of innocent people. I want the full force of the law on them and I want to make sure they realise that there is a limit when it comes to profit which affects people's lives," he said.

Arrests have already been made in Terengganu and Selangor connected to the issuance of fake certificates.

Meanwhile, the Federation of Private Medical Practitioners' Association Malaysia (FPMPAM) called the issuance of fake documents an "unforgivable criminal act".

"If a registered medical practitioner (RMP) is found guilty, the offending doctor should be struck off the MMC register permanently," FPMPAM president Dr Steven Chow said in a statement.

He said that since general practitioners were first roped into the national immunisation programme, FPMPAM had been constantly advising participants to turn away irregular requests.

"We hope the investigations will also be able to identify the segments of the Malaysian population who are paying for these fake vaccination certificates and to take appropriate action to address the problem.

"The majority of Malaysians do want to get proper vaccine protection and certification. The government cannot allow this trust deficit to affect bona fide providers and the millions of receivers of the vaccine."

Chow also proposed that as an additional security measure, the personal details of the person administering the vaccine should be included on certificates.

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