

More dengue deaths as Zika looms

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Ministry: 37 fatalities recorded so far this year, number of cases on the rise

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KAJANG: Barely over a month into the new year, fighting dengue remains a priority for the country with an alarming rate of 37 deaths so far.

The desperation is further driven by the looming Zika epidemic.

The number of deaths is only slightly lower than the 40 recorded from Jan 1 to Feb 2 last year.

The number of cases were higher

at 15,251 compared to 13,251 during the same period last year.

Selangor topped the list with 7,355 cases, followed by 2,379 cases in Johor and 994 in Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya.

Twelve dengue deaths were recorded in Selangor, seven in Penang and six in Terengganu.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam said it was even more worrying with the Zika scare hovering.

The World Health Organisation warned that the virus was spreading

in the Americas, with three to four million cases expected this year.

Closer to Malaysia, an Indonesian research team has found a positive Zika case in Sumatra on Sunday.

Dr Subramaniam said getting rid of the breeding grounds was the root solution to bringing dengue under control.

The effort, he said, would also be important to prevent the spread of the Zika virus.

"We constantly carry out methods such as widespread larvicidal spraying to destroy larvae and out-

door residual spraying, which is best when used on high-rise residences," he said after visiting the Seri Cempaka Apartment in Bandar Baru Bangi here yesterday.

The apartment, which had 41 dengue cases last month, was one of the 233 hotspots nationwide.

There were six dengue outbreaks at the apartment last year and the longest was for three months.

In Johor Baru, the public especially urbanites have been told to clean up their act to prevent any more unnecessary deaths due to

the dengue virus.

Johor Health and Environment committee chairman Datuk Ayub Rahmat said the virus had already claimed three deaths in Johor, which was one more than the two recorded in January last year.

The state also saw a total of 2,115 dengue cases in January, a 201.7% increase from the 701 cases recorded for the same period last year.

Watch the video
thestartv.com

