

Nation records more than 18,000 dengue cases

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PETALING JAYA: More than 18,000 dengue cases have been reported between January and June, says Deputy Health Minister 1, Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali.

“Since January till June 4, 2022, Malaysia has reported 18,884 dengue cases with 12 deaths,” he told *The Star*.

He said the number of cases have risen by 62.4%, from the 11,629 cases reported in the same period in 2021.

However, the number is still lower than the figures reported in the same period of 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic had started and the pre-Covid 19 period of 2019, where 46,713 and 52,941 cases were reported, respectively.

Selangor is ahead of the list so far this year, with 12,644 cases, followed by Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya with 1,679 cases, Sabah (1,205), Johor (822), and Negri Sembilan (545).

Dr Noor Azmi said dengue transmissions depend on a number of factors, both modifiable and non-modifiable.

“There is a positive association between dengue incidence and weather variables (non-modifiable) such as temperature and rainfall. Increased rainfall creates new habitats for *Aedes* mosquito breeding,” he said.

The raised temperature shortens the period for the mosquito to become infective after having bitten someone with the dengue virus. This is the extrinsic incubation period. In addition, the *Aedes* becomes more active in its biting behaviour with higher temperatures.

When the mosquito population increases in the shared environment with human beings, the virus circulation in the community becomes faster, leading to subsequent higher reportings of local dengue incidences, he said.