

'Dengue now a major issue'

Johor exco: High number of cases due to lack of cleanliness

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JOHOR BARU: The dengue situation in Johor is now a major concern.

The main contributor for the high number of cases being reported is the increasing amount of mosquito breeding places due to irresponsible throwing of garbage, says a state executive councillor.

"The people have been informed to clean up their areas but authorities are still finding mosquito breeding places," said state Health, Culture and Heritage Committee chairman Mohd Khuzzan Abu Bakar.

The state recorded an increase of 3,904 cases or 101.2% within the

first eight months of this year compared to the same period in 2018.

Until Aug 31, there have been 7,761 dengue cases recorded compared to 3,857 cases in the same period in 2018.

Mohd Khuzzan pointed out that deaths caused by dengue in the state has also jumped to 19 cases so far this year, compared to 12 cases last year in the corresponding period.

"The dengue situation in Johor is a major worry," he said when met during an operation on dengue outbreaks at Taman Damai Jaya in Skudai here yesterday.

Mohd Khuzzan added that Johor Baru was still the highest district with reported dengue cases at 74.8%.

This is followed by Kluang (6.1%), Kulai (4.2%), Batu Pahat (3.5%), Muar (2.4%), Kota Tinggi (2.1%), Segamat (2%), Tangkak (1.9%), Pontian (1.5%) and Mersing (1.4%).

He said this showed an increase of dengue cases in all districts in Johor, particularly Mersing and Kluang.

The state government has launched a joint operation involving the Johor Health Department, local authorities, SWCorp, and the police to conduct inspection for mosquito larvae in privately owned premises such as houses.

Mohd Khuzzan said the reason the operation was launched at Taman Damai Jaya was due to the stubbornness of residents by not allowing Health Department per-

sonnel to inspect their houses.

"The action of entering a premises to conduct inspection and control can be taken under the Extermination of Disease Carrying Insects Act 1975," he said.

He added that if premises were found to be breeding mosquitoes, owners would be slapped with a RM500 compound.

Failure to settle the compound will lead to court action involving a maximum RM10,000 fine, imprisonment of not more than two years or both, upon conviction.

Mohd Khuzzan also said that so far, authorities had issued a total of 3,511 compounds in Johor amounting to RM1.74ml, with five cases referred to court due to failure to settle the compounds.