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Tajuk : Kapit Tops Number Of Melioidosis Cases In Sarawak.

Kapit tops number of melioidosis cases in Sarawak

MIRI: Out of the 505 melioidosis cases reported in the state from 2010 to 2012, 80.2 per cent were detected in the districts of Kapit, Kuching, Miri and Bintulu.

This was revealed by Director of State Health Department Datuk Dr Zulkifli Jantan in his situational analysis of the disease in the state during a workshop, 'Melioidosis in Malaysian Borneo: Neglected No More' at a leading hotel here yesterday.

"A total 252 cases were reported in Kapit, 58 in Bintulu, Belaga (50), Miri (44) and Kuching (19)."

He added in the first six months of this year 24 cases of melioidosis were reported in the state resulting in five deaths.

In 2010, 343 cases were reported with 17 deaths. The number decreased in 2011 to 121 (11 deaths) and the number dropped further to 40 cases in 2012 with just one fatality.

He said, melioidosis or also known as Whitmore's disease is an infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Burkholderia pseudomallei* found in the soil and water.

Meanwhile, a PhD candidate at Menzies School of Health Research and Research Officer at Institute of Health and Community Medicine University Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) Yuwana Pondi yesterday unveiled her new research finding on the disease at the workshop.

Yuwana said she hoped further studies and research would be carried on melioidosis as to find better ways in diagnosing the disease and treating patients.

About 60 participants comprising health professionals from Sabah, Sarawak, Peninsular Malaysia and Australia attended the workshop.

The three-day workshop is a joint effort between Menzies School of Health Research Darwin Australia, Unimas, state Health Department and Australia-Malaysia Institute.