

Baby boom didn't deliver

PETALING JAYA: While the country may have expected a baby boom this year due to the implementation of the movement control order, the number of births in the country instead saw a sharp decline in the first quarter of 2021, according to the Department of Statistics Malaysia.

Based on the demographic data released today, there was a significant 10.8% drop or 102,969 decrease in babies born in the first quarter of 2021 compared to the same period last year.

It was the biggest quarterly drop when comparing the live birth figures since 2017. The births recorded in the single months from January to March 2021 also saw significant decreases when compared to the same months last year.

The number of births in January recorded a 17.6% drop compared to the previous year, while there were 8.9% and 6.1% fewer births in February 2021 and March 2021 respectively.

At the same time, there was a 0.7% increase in the number of deaths recorded in the same quarter, with men outnumbering women by making up almost 60% of the total.

A total of 801 deaths due to Covid-19 were recorded in the first quarter of 2021, an increase of 70.1% compared to 471 deaths in 2020.

Chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin in a statement today said there was no baby boom in the first quarter of 2021 as anticipated following the MCO due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"In the first quarter of 2021, male babies outnumbered female babies with 53,292 births compared to females (49,677 births).

"Selangor recorded the highest live births with 19,729 births (19.1%) while Labuan recorded the lowest (368 births: 0.4%)," he noted.

The country also recorded a 0.7% increase in the number of deaths in the first quarter of 2021, with a total of 43,545 deaths. The number of deaths recorded in the single months of January to March 2021 were also higher when compared to the same period last year.

The number of deaths in January recorded a 0.3% rise compared to the same period in 2020, while there were 1.1% and 0.9% more deaths in February 2021 and March 2021 respectively.

Dr Mohd Uzir said the number of deaths recorded for males were higher at 25,076 (58%) while females were at 18,469 (42%).

“During the same period, Selangor recorded the highest number of deaths with 6,909 deaths (15.2%) while Putrajaya recorded the lowest with 65 deaths (0.1%).

He highlighted that a total of 801 deaths due to Covid-19 were recorded in the first quarter of 2021, an increase of 70.1% compared to 471 deaths in 2020.

“Selangor recorded the highest number of deaths due to Covid-19 with 285 deaths while Putrajaya recorded the lowest with two deaths and no deaths were recorded in Perlis,” Dr Mohd Uzir said.

The Statistics Department revealed that Malaysia’s population in the first quarter of 2021 increased by 0.4% compared to the same period in the previous year, with an estimate of 32.75 million persons.

The total population comprised 29.91 million (91.3%) citizens and 2.84 million (8.7%) non-citizens.

The composition of population aged 65 years and over (old age) increased from 2.26 million to 2.37 million during the same period, while the working age population aged 15-64 years old increased from 22.74 million in the first quarter of 2020 to 22.82 million in the same quarter this year.

The population aged 0-14 years old (young age) in the first quarter 2021 decreased by 0.6% from 7.61 million in the first quarter 2020 to 7.56 million.

“This trend is in line with other developed countries that are heading towards ageing population,” it noted.

The department also revealed that in the first quarter 2021, the population of males (16.83 million) outnumbered females (15.92 million).

“Three states with the highest population composition in the first quarter of 2021 are Selangor (20.0%) followed by Sabah (11.9%) and Johor (11.6%). Labuan recorded the lowest population composition at 0.3%,” it said.