More cases of tuberculosis appear

> Rise is attributed to improved detection, but still below WHO standards

BY VATHANI PANIRCHELLVUM

SHAH ALAM: Malaysia has still not reached the optimal detection level for tuberculosis (TB) as recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO), said Selangor Health director Datuk Azman Abu Bakar.

He said some 500 cases still go undetected, thus creating potential for further spread of the disease.

In Selangor, he said, there was 16% more TB cases reported in 2013 as compared to 2012, with 4,191 cases and 245 deaths.

TB cases have increased by 6% in Malaysia with 24,071 cases reported in 2013 due to an increased disease detection system that has been carried out by the Health Ministry.

“This makes TB the second highest infectious disease in Malaysia, and the highest cause of death by infectious diseases,” said Azman.

He said while Malaysia has improved the detection of the disease, it has yet to reach the optimal detection level as recommended by WHO.

He was speaking at the launch of World Tuberculosis Day for Selangor in University Teknologi Mara (UiTM).

At the launch, as part of the National Blue Ocean Strategy (NBOS), the activity “Public-Public-Mix” was launched to forge cooperation between experts to strengthen the detection and the treatment of TB in Selangor.

Azman said another measure taken by the Selangor Health Department was to publish a book that compiled all the policies and guidelines pertaining to TB and leprosy.

“This gives people access to services that are standardised, professional, efficient and effective in any medical facility, let it be public or private, in Selangor,” he said.