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Committee needed to monitor halal certified medicines — don

KUALA LUMPUR: A special steering and implementing committee should be set up to ensure that halal certified medicines are prescribed to Muslims in the country, said an academician.

Universiti Sains Malaysia dean of the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences Prof Dr Syed Azhar Syed Sulaiman said the committee could ensure that the pharmaceutical industry in the country would be transparent and committed in responding to the needs of Muslim consumers who were sensitive over halal issue.

He said the committee could work closely with monitoring agencies such as the Islamic Development Department (Jakim) in finding ways to resolve the halal issue in the pharmaceutical industry.

“We should be ashamed of ourselves as the halal pharmaceutical industry in the country is still lagging behind that of non-Islamic countries like Thailand and Belgium,” he said.

He was when presenting a paper entitled ‘Halal Medicine in the Pharmaceutical Industry: Steps Towards Production and Empowerment’ at the ‘Halal Food Crisis: Towards a Solution’ seminar here yesterday.

Syed Azhar said Muslim consumers could be a pressure group by demanding pharmaceutical industry players to implement and expand the halal medicine industry.

“The main constraints are posed by the stakeholders themselves as they feel that the implementation of halal pharmaceutical products entails high cost besides the need to comply with the Malaysian

Standard - MS 2424:2020,” he said.

Malaysian Standard - MS 2424:2020 (P): Halal Pharmaceuticals General Guidelines, is the world’s first incorporated general guidelines for Halal pharmaceuticals.

Commenting on the need for dosage prescription on drug labels, Chemical Company of Malaysia transformation and halal excellence general manager Roziatul Akmah Osman said this would help distinguish whether a particular product was a supplement or a drug (medicine).

“In pharmaceutical, dosage prescription is needed as there are scheduled drugs, for which overdose of drugs could be poisonous. The dosage prescription is important whether a product is halal or otherwise,” she said. - Bernama