

## 'Emergency' plan has docs hot and bothered - Nation | The Star Online

PETALING JAYA: The Government's decision to declare a "heatwave emergency" only when temperatures hit 40°C for seven consecutive days has medical practitioners hot under the collar.

Medical Practitioners Coalition Association of Malaysia (MPCAM) vice-president Dr Raj Kumar Maharajah said he was puzzled.

"Our country's average temperature is 31°C to 33°C. When there is a 5°C increase, the Government should already be declaring a heatwave emergency. They don't need to wait till it hits 40°C," he said.

Dr Raj believes schools should be closed if the temperature remains at the current temperatures of 37°C-38°C.

"It is better to close schools because most Malaysian schools are not air-conditioned," he said, adding that students might suffer from heat exhaustion and cramps.

However, he was pleased that the Cabinet had approved a plan to set up a special committee to monitor this phenomenon.

Malaysian Medical Association president Dr Ashok Zachariah Philip was unsure of the move.

"The Government should provide specific measures on what they will do instead of just declaring such a statement," he said.

However, he did not see a need for schools to be closed because of the heatwave.

Dr Ashok advises Malaysians to stay indoors, drink enough water, wear protective clothing and use sunblock.