



Dr Jerip (second right) takes a closer look at medicines displayed at one of the booths.

# Sarawak sees fewer cases of burn injuries

**MIRI:** Statistics for government hospital admission of patients suffering from burns throughout Sarawak was 719 cases in 2015, versus 405 cases last year — a drop of 31 per cent.

Assistant Minister for Public Health Datuk Dr Jerip Susil said the number was an encouragement for the government to hold more talks and workshops to instil public awareness of burn injuries.

The recent tragedy at the ICU ward in Hospital Sultanah Aminah, Johor and the fire at SMK St Teresa in Kuching in October last year should be taken as a lesson.

“It is essential for all organisations, be they in the public or private sector, to be ready to face such situations as and when the need arises by having appropriate equipment, facilities and training.

“The long-term consequences of major burns are permanent disfigurement, prolonged hospitalisation, psychological problems and impaired functions.

It is therefore crucial for the public to know about prevention of fires and burns,” he said prior to launching the ‘Third Sarawak Burn Update’ here yesterday.

Dr Jerip said the government had taken some measures including setting up a new Burn Unit in Bintulu Hospital which had four beds, comprising two intensive care units and two high dependency units, to treat burn cases from the surrounding areas and neighbouring districts.

“Such a unit is needed here because Bintulu has many heavy industries including those coming up in Samalaju. Having burn awareness programmes at shopping complexes, and having talks on television and radio are initiatives taken by Department of Plastic Surgery of Sarawak General Hospital to instil awareness in the public,” he said.

“Medical service providers comprising surgeons, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, anaesthetists,

dietician and pharmacists are important to achieve our target of delivering optimal treatment and consequently, reduce risk of burn complications in patients.”

Dr Jerip hoped more doctors, especially local ones, would venture into the field of plastic surgery because at the moment only two plastic surgeons had been assigned to Sarawak by the Ministry of Health.

The talk was attended by over 400 people from government and private hospitals, nursing colleges in Sarawak, Peninsular Malaysia and Brunei.

The event was also attended by plastic surgeon and head of SGH Department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Dr John Ranjit Nesaraj; senior consultant plastic surgeon and head of plastic surgery at Sungai Buloh Hospital, Selangor, Dr Salina Ibrahim; director of Miri Hospital Dr Jack Wong and state director of Fire and Rescue Department Nor Hisyam Mohammad.