

## 'Govt must strengthen geriatric-ready facilities'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Development in the country, especially involving healthcare facilities, needs to be designed to be geriatric-ready or suited to the needs of the elderly as the country prepares to embrace the status of an ageing nation by 2030, the Dewan Rakyat was told yesterday.

Health Deputy Minister Datuk Lukanisman Awang Sauni said this need is being carried out through joint planning with relevant ministries to ensure recreational spaces, public amenities and facility designs are in line with the requirements of an increasingly ageing population.

"We cannot implement these policies and guidelines alone. That is why we are planning with relevant ministries to ensure every development and plan provides suitable spaces for recreational activities.

"The same goes for other places, such as shopping malls, where we encourage the use of existing spaces to create areas that promote shopping and healthy living," he said during the question-and-answer session in the Dewan Rakyat.

He was replying to a supplementary question from Dr Halimah Ali (PN-Kapar), who asked about the effectiveness of the health campaigns that cannot be conducted by the ministry alone, but must instead be driven through the "whole-of-nation" concept, involving cooperation between the public and private sectors.

In reply to the original question

from Zahir Hassan (PH-Wangsa Maju), who wanted to know the strategy of dealing with an ageing nation by 2030, Lukanisman said the Health Ministry is strengthening the Senior Citizen Healthcare Service to help the group achieve optimum health through comprehensive and integrated services.

He said the Senior Citizen Healthcare Service Action Plan 2023-2030 has been implemented to strengthen patient-centred care, including health promotion, screening, treatment, referrals, counselling, home visits, rehabilitation and elderly club activities at 1,103 health clinics, in addition to placing 42 geriatric specialists in 21 government hospitals.

He also said the Stanford University 2022 report showed that Malaysia is among the countries with low levels of daily physical activity.

He added that the ministry is implementing initiatives to cultivate healthy living under Agenda Nasional Malaysia Sihat.

The initiatives include the "10,000 steps a day" campaign, the preparation of guidelines for an active lifestyle among civil servants, workplace sports culture and the formulation of the National Strategic Plan for Active Living 2026-2030.

Lukanisman also said various campaigns, such as the "War On Sugar", have been implemented to remind the public to reduce sugar intake.

He was responding to a supplementary question from Zahir



Lukanisman said the Senior Citizen Healthcare Service Action Plan 2023-2030 has been implemented to strengthen patient-centred care, including health screening, treatment, counselling, rehabilitation and elderly club activities at 1,103 health clinics. — ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

on the effectiveness of the non-communicable disease campaigns, such as on diabetes.

He said part of the revenue from the sugar-sweetened beverage tax, amounting to RM25 million, is channelled back to the ministry to purchase medicines related to

diabetes treatment.

"We hope to get support from all parties, especially the elected representatives and government agencies so that the ministry does not work in silo in carrying out campaigns such as the 'War On Sugar'." — Bernama



Wakil syarikat RR Beaute Solution dan Akademi Latihan CTA di Mahkamah Sesyen Jenayah 2, di Georgetown, semalam.

## 2 syarikat sedia khidmat klinik haram disaman

**Georgetown:** Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mengemukakan saman di Mahkamah Sesyen Jenayah 2, di sini, semalam terhadap dua syarikat yang didapati menyediakan klinik perubatan swasta tidak berdaftar tahun lalu.

Syarikat itu, RR Beaute Solution Sdn Bhd dan Akademi Latihan CTA Sdn Bhd yang diwakili dua individu memaklumkan pekerja syarikat terbabit dengan masing-masing sebagai pembantu peribadi dan pembantu tadbir di bahagian sumber manusia.

Bagaimanapun, dua individu itu bagi pihak syarikat mengaku tidak bersalah dan mohon dibicarakan selepas pertuduhan dibacakan jurubahasa di hadapan Hakim Irwan Suainbon.

Berdasarkan pertuduhan, RR Beaute Solution dan Akademi Latihan CTA didapati menyediakan klinik perubatan swasta tanpa didaftarkan mengikut Seksyen 27, Akta Kemudahan dan Perkhidmatan Jagaan Kesihatan Swasta 1998 (Akta 586).

Kesalahan itu dilakukan di

sebuah premis di Jalan Rangoon daerah Timur Laut, Georgetown, Pulau Pinang pada 22 Oktober 2024, jam 10.15 pagi.

Pendakwaan dikemukakan mengikut Seksyen 4 (1) Akta 586 dan sabit kesalahan boleh didenda tidak melebihi RM500,000.

Prosiding kes dikendalikan pegawai pendakwa raya dari Cawangan Kawalan Amalan Perubatan Swasta, Bahagian Amalan Perubatan KKM, Dr Mohd Fikri Mohammad Fishoul dan Shamsul Nizam Kassim, manakala tertuduh diwakili peguam, V Parthipan.

Mahkamah kemudian menetapkan 22 Disember depan sebagai tarikh pengurusan kes dan serahan dokumen.

Sebelum ini, muncul beberapa hantaran tular di media sosial mendakwa klinik tidak berdaftar terbabit didakwa mempunyai kaitan dengan seorang pengengaruh wanita dalam bidang kecantikan bersama suaminya dikenali sebagai 'mentor kewangan'.

**COMMENT**  
by Dr Asmida Isa

**“THIS** is the best experiment ever!” one boy exclaimed during a recent USM STEM Week programme at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sri Aman, moments after he successfully extracted strawberry DNA. His excitement filled the room.

For him, it wasn't just a school experiment; it was the moment science became real, something he could touch and understand.

Every spark of curiosity begins somewhere. For some it starts with a question, a broken toy or a simple “why?” For others it begins in a classroom filled with laughter, colour and wonder. That simple experiment reminded me how small hands-on experiences can shape how a child sees science and themselves. Sometimes, the biggest ambitions begin with the smallest moments of discovery.

**Small sparks, lasting impact**

That moment at SK Sri Aman brought to mind a story shared by my colleague, Prof Dr Badrul Hisham Yahaya. As a boy, he too once took part in a DNA extraction activity just like the one we conducted.

That memory stayed with him for decades, sparking a fascination with science that eventually grew into a distinguished career. Today, he is a scientist recognised nationally and internationally.

His story is a reminder that science does not begin in a lab or a textbook; it begins with curiosity, with the joy of doing, discovering and understanding. Every child deserves that chance to see, to question and to experiment.

When curiosity is nurtured early, it builds more than knowledge; it builds confidence, imagination and belief in what is possible. But beyond those individual sparks lies a harder question: How do we sustain them? How do we ensure that the excitement of that first strawberry DNA experiment does not fade into disinterest or worse, discouragement?

**Quality and methodology of teaching**

One perennial issue in Malaysia's

# Nurturing curiosity in STEM education

*“Fixing Malaysia's STEM future requires more than isolated programmes or short-term campaigns. It calls for a consistent long-term effort to address the underlying issues that have persisted for years.”*

STEM journey lies in the quality of teaching and methodology. According to a report by the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia, a 2023 study by the Academy of Sciences Malaysia revealed that nearly half of our science teachers do not hold a bachelor's degree in science, and opportunities for professional development remain limited.

This gap matters because the way science is taught determines whether students experience it as discovery or as drudgery. Too often, classrooms remain teacher-centred and textbook-heavy, focused on memorisation rather than on exploration.

A 2021 study by researchers from Universiti Selangor showed that this traditional approach discourages curiosity and critical thinking, the very skills that define science itself.

To cultivate true scientific literacy, teaching must evolve from “telling” to “showing”. Children should be encouraged to design, test and question, to learn not only what the answer is but also how we arrive at it.

**Inadequate infrastructure, talent gap and brain drain**

Even the most passionate teachers cannot succeed without proper tools. Across Malaysia, disparities in infrastructure, especially between urban and rural schools, continue to undermine effective learning.

According to a 2024 report by Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), poor laboratory maintenance, a lack of working equipment and unstable internet connectivity remain persistent barriers to quality STEM education.

When science is confined to theory because a school lacks microscopes or reliable WiFi, students lose out on the most powerful form of learning: doing. Innovation cannot thrive in an environment where curiosity has no outlet.

The ripple effects of weak early exposure extend far beyond the classroom. Malaysia faces a workforce talent gap, a mismatch between academic output and industry needs.

The Malaysian Association of Engineers has reported high dropout rates in engineering programmes due to their intensity, alongside a growing shortage of skilled professionals that contribute to project delays and higher costs.

Meanwhile, brain drain remains an ongoing challenge. Talented Malaysians continue to leave for opportunities abroad, citing limited career progression, weak research infrastructure and a lack of talent recognition at home.

All these issues point to a single truth: building Malaysia's STEM future requires more than producing graduates; it demands an ecosystem



Every spark of curiosity begins somewhere. For some it starts with a question, a broken toy or a simple “why?” For others it begins in a classroom filled with laughter, colour and wonder. — AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THE SUN

that connects quality education, meaningful employment and national recognition of scientific talent.

**Looking forward**

Fixing Malaysia's STEM future requires more than isolated programmes or short-term campaigns. It calls for a consistent long-term effort to address the underlying issues that have persisted for years.

These challenges – from teacher quality and training to infrastructure gaps and talent retention – are interconnected and solving one without the others will only offer temporary relief.

Firstly, professional development for teachers must be made a national priority, not an optional exercise. Equipping educators with the right skills, confidence and resources is fundamental to nurturing a generation that can think critically and creatively.

Secondly, schools – especially those in rural and underprivileged areas – must be given proper laboratories, functional internet

access and hands-on materials that make science tangible. Without equal access to tools of discovery, the STEM dream remains unevenly distributed.

Finally, education must be linked more intentionally to the workforce and innovation ecosystem. When students can see clear pathways from classroom learning to real-world careers, they are more likely to stay the course.

Building partnerships between universities, industries and policymakers can ensure that Malaysia's scientific talent finds opportunity at home, not just abroad.

The boy who held a vial of strawberry DNA in his hands may one day design Malaysia's next great innovation. But that journey depends on what we do today; how we teach, invest and how we value science as a national priority.

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## 40 TERKANDAS DI HATYAI

# Pelajar talasemia kehabisan ubat

**Sintok:** Seramai 40 pelajar dan pensyarah Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) yang terkandas di hotel di Hatyai, Thailand kini kekurangan bekalan makanan apabila hanya makan bubur nasi dicatu manakala seorang pelajar pembawa talasemia dilaporkan kehabisan ubat.

Tiada siapa dalam kumpulan itu mampu keluar membeli ubat atau makanan berikutan paras air menenggelami seluruh kawasan di hotel terbabit.

Pelajar terbabit peserta Thai-MYS Cultural Exchange Programme 2025 dan sepatutnya pulang Sabtu lalu, namun mereka terperangkap di hotel akibat banjir besar tanpa bekalan elektrik dan air.

Kumpulan itu terperangkap di dua hotel berbeza di Hatyai.

Pelajar, Mimi Nadzirah Afiah Md Suhaimi, 21, berkata, mereka semakin buntu apabila bekalan makanan berkurangan selain internet sering terputus.

"Keadaan kami terkawal tapi makanan makin sedi-



*Hujan tak berhenti, air makin naik. Kami tak boleh keluar. Internet pun putus-putus. Kami benar-benar perlukan bantuan"*

Mimi Nadzirah Afiah  
Md Suhaimi

kit. Kami cuma makan bubur dicatu.

"Hujan tak berhenti, air makin naik. Kami tak boleh keluar. Internet pun putus-putus. Kami benar-benar perlukan bantuan," katanya ketika berhubung menerusi WhatsApp dengan pengurusan UUM, malam kelmarin.

Menurutnya, seorang rakan mereka yang merupakan pembawa talasemia kini berhadapan risiko kesihatan serius selepas kehabisan ubat yang perlu diambil secara berkala bagi menstabilkan hemoglobin dalam badan.

"Kami lihat bot lalu dua

tiga kali tapi tak berhenti. Kami hanya berdoa satu daripada bot itu akan hurlkan makanan," katanya.

Menurutnya, pensyarah, Dr Mohd Hadzrami Harun Rasit dan Dr Muhammad Harith Zahrullail meredah air sedalam hampir semeter antara hotel demi memeriksa keadaan pelajar dan memastikan tiada jatuh sakit atau panik.

Sementara itu, Timbalan Naib Canselor (HEPA) yang menjalankan tugas Naib Canselor UUM, Prof Dr Ahmad Martadha Mohamed berkata, pihak universiti sentiasa berhubung dengan Konsulat Malaysia di Hatyai dan ibu bapa pelajar untuk mendapatkan perkembangan terkini.

"Keselamatan pelajar adalah keutamaan. Kami memaklumkan keadaan mereka secara berkala kepada ibu bapa," katanya.

Beliau berharap bantuan dapat digerakkan segera termasuk penghantaran makanan, bekalan ubat serta urusan membawa pulang pelajar dan pensyarah yang terkandas.

## 1,006 rakyat Malaysia terperangkap diselamat

**Sungai Petani:** Seramai 1,006 rakyat Malaysia yang terperangkap akibat banjir di Hatyai, Thailand berjaya diselamatkan oleh pasukan penyelamat sukarelawan Malaysia sehingga tengah hari semalam.

Paras air di laluan menuju Hatyai dilaporkan mulai surut, sekali gus membolehkan lapan bot penyelamat, lima jet ski serta beberapa lori sarat dengan bekalan bantuan dibawa masuk ke kawasan terjejas.

Pengerusi Pasukan Bomba Sukarela Sungai Petani, Leong Beng Tat berkata, susulan penyusutan paras air, pasukannya memanfaatkan peluang menyalurkan bantuan keperluan asas kepada rakyat Malaysia yang terkandas.

Katanya, ketika ini fokus utama mereka membawa keluar mangsa berisiko tinggi seperti warga emas, wanita dan kanak-kanak terlebih dahulu.

"Sehingga tengah hari tadi, 1,006 rakyat Malaysia berjaya diselamatkan manakala kira-kira 1,000 lagi masih



ANTARA rakyat Malaysia yang diselamatkan di Hatyai oleh penyelamat sukarelawan Malaysia pagi semalam.

sekitar Hatyai mengikut rekod," katanya.

"Kita edaya-upaya selamatkan dan bawa mereka keluar ke tempat selamat sebelum dihantar ke sempadan," katanya ketika dihubungi, semalam.

Menurutnya, terdapat juga mangsa enggan beredar kerana menunggu ahli keluarga lain atau tidak mahu meninggalkan bagasi mereka.

"Memandangkan ruang bot terhad dan prinsip utama kami menyelamatkan nyawa terlebih dahulu, kami tidak dapat membawa keluar bagasi dalam jumlah besar.

"Keadaan ini sedikit-sebanyak menjejaskan kelancaran operasi," katanya.

# French lab taps mRNA's potential to fight cancer

**I**NSIDE a lab in the French city of Orleans, scientists are testing out the limits of molecules in our body called messenger RNA — best known for being used in Covid-19 vaccines — in the hopes of finding a breakthrough treatment for a particularly deadly cancer.

Messenger RNA, or mRNA, are molecules that carry genetic information from the DNA in every cell in the body to create specific proteins.

"For cancer, this message will stimulate the patient's ability to effectively fight tumours," Dimitri Saymczak, project manager of French research institute Inserm's ART lab in Orleans, told AFP.

While mRNA was discovered in the early 1960s, it rose to global prominence when scientists used it to swiftly develop next-generation vaccines during the Covid pandemic, earning the medical Nobel prize in 2023.

Today, most research in the field is focused on developing vaccines to fight cancer, but mRNA holds "many other possibilities", ART lab head Chantal Pichon said.

"It can be used to boost immunity,

compensate for malfunctioning cells, target rare or genetic diseases — and even treat allergies," she added.

There are more than 200 mRNA clinical trials being conducted by both big pharma firms and new start-ups across the world, many of them in the United States, China and Japan, Pichon said.

But France has "some of the best fundamental research teams working on mRNA", she added.

At the ART lab in Orleans, scientists are making different kinds of mRNA to "test them on cells to check they are not toxic and that they work", Saymczak said.

The RNA used in experiments are usually produced in test tubes, a costly

process often patented by American companies.

However, some of the lab's scientists are seeking an alternative by creating the RNAs in yeast, which has the potential to slash costs by 10 to 50 times.

But these RNAs then need to be cleaned and checked to make sure they meet the requirements of the pharmaceutical industry.

Another team is trying to find a new treatment for pancreatic cancer, which has an extremely low survival rate after being diagnosed.

The idea is to use the mRNA to teach immune cells to defend themselves against this very aggressive cancer.

Scientists hope they can use the power of mRNA to increase the survival of pancreatic cancer patients.



Supported by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission



A researcher working on an mRNA transcription reaction at the Inserm ART-mRNA laboratory of the CHR/Regional Hospital Cochin, in Orleans, central France, here.

# JUS SEGAR

## Minuman Harian yang Berkhasiat

**TAHUKAH** anda bahawa sumber nutrien terbaik sebenarnya mudah didapati di dapur anda sendiri? Mangga dan pisang yang terbiar di atas kaunter, epal lama yang masih elok, lemon segar, atau beri yang tersimpan di dalam peti sejuk.

Semuanya merupakan penggalak imun semula jadi yang menunggu masa untuk memberikan khasiat berharga

kepada tubuh kita, termasuk bagi mereka yang sibuk dengan rutin harian.

Jus segar ialah penawar semula jadi yang berharga dalam kehidupan setiap individu. Sama ada diminum secara terus atau dikisar menggunakan pemerah jus dan pengisar, buah-buahan serta sayur-sayuran mengandungi vitamin, mineral dan fitonutrien (bahan kimia tumbuhan) yang sangat diperlukan oleh tubuh setiap hari.

Jus segar daripada buah-buahan dan sayur-sayuran mengandungi

pelbagai nutrien penting yang memberi manfaat besar kepada kesihatan.

Jus dapat membantu mengurangkan risiko penyakit, meningkatkan sistem imun, membersihkan hati dan organ dalaman, melancarkan penghadaman, menyingkirkan toksin berbahaya, serta membantu mengawal berat badan.

Berikut beberapa cara menarik dan lazat untuk menikmati manfaat luar biasa daripada tumbuh-tumbuhan semula jadi yang mudah didapati di sekeliling kita:

- Jadikan amalan membeli-belah buah-buahan dan sayur-sayuran sekali seminggu agar ia sentiasa segar.
- Simpan buah-buahan di tempat yang mudah dilihat dan dicapai, susun dalam mangkuk, bakul, atau di rak atas peti sejuk.
- Masukkan satu atau dua biji epal ke dalam kotak makan tengah hari anda.
- Untuk kotak makan tengah hari kanak-kanak, hiris buah-buahan menjadi kepingan kecil atau susun mengikut bentuk menarik supaya kelihatan lebih seronok dan menggoda selera.
- Tambahkan buah-buahan dan sayur-sayuran dalam setiap hidangan. cincang halus dan jadikan ia bahan masakan atau hiasan.
- Untuk sarapan, tambah hirisan pisang, pic, epal atau beri ke dalam bijirin.
- Selain sup sebagai pembuka selera, cuba smoothie yang menyegarkan dan penuh nutrisi.
- Hidangkan hidangan utama bersama hirisan buah-buahan seperti aprikot atau epal untuk rasa manis semula jadi.
- Untuk menenangkan diri, nikmati jus segar campuran, cuba gabungan timun, saderi, lemon dan pudina untuk rasa yang segar dan detoks semula jadi.
- Jika inginkan sesuatu yang sejuk dan menyegarkan, gantikan ais krim bergula dengan minuman buah-buahan buatan sendiri
- Campurkan buah kegemaran seperti mangga atau strawberi, tuangkan ke dalam acuan jeli dan bekukan selama beberapa jam untuk menikmati snek berair yang sihat dan sedap.
- Walaupun jus paling baik diminum segar, anda boleh menyimpan jus kegemaran dalam termos untuk dinikmati semasa perjalanan ke tempat kerja.
- Potong buah-buahan menjadi kiub kecil dan campurkan dengan kacang tanpa garam atau bijian sebagai snek sihat yang mudah dimakan bila-bila masa.
- Cipta kombinasi menarik dengan mencampurkan pelbagai buah, contohnya epal rangup dengan anggur berair dan pisang
- Semasa memasak, tingkatkan resipi biasa dengan menggunakan buah-buahan campuran sebagai asas sos yang lebih sihat dan semula jadi.
- Untuk jamuan atau majlis kecil, susun kiub mangga, tembikai, kiwi, anggur dan strawberi pada lidi buluh kecil sebagai pembuka selera atau pencuci mulut yang cantik dan menyihatkan.