



PENGURUSAN PEMANTAUAN KERATAN AKHBAR MBSJ
TARIKH: 14 MEI 2024 (SELASA)

ISU/ADUAN

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Banjir kilat: Warga Puchong mahu jalan penyelesaian

Oleh MOHD AZLIM ZAINURY Follow
13 Mei 2024 03:55pm Masa membaca: 4 minit



Keadaan banjir kilat di Kampung Sri Andalas pada Ahad. Gambar kecil: Ng Sze Han dan Tajul Ikhwani

PUCHONG - Taburan hujan yang tinggi daripada taburan normal dikenal pasti sebagai punca utama berlakunya banjir kilat di sekitar Puchong dekat sini pada Ahad lalu.

Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri (ADUN) Kinrara, Ng Sze Han ketika dihubungi berkata, taburan hujan merekodkan penerimaan hujan lebat melebihi 90 milimeter (mm) dalam tempoh satu jam.

Selain itu, beliau yang juga Ahli Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri Selangor mengakui antara faktor lain menyebabkan banjir kilat adalah faktor longkang tersumbat.



Keadaan banjir kilat di laluan arah selatan dari Puchong Jaya ke IOI Puchong

"Taburan hujan hampir 90mm (dalam tempoh) satu jam semalam (pada Ahad). Saya telah minta pihak Majlis Bandaraya Subang Jaya (MBSJ) lihat.

"Saya juga minta MBSJ bersihkan longkang dan pastikan ia tidak tersumbat dan MBSJ akan siasat dan bincangkan secara terperinci (punca dan solusi) semasa mesyuarat penuh bulan ini," katanya kepada Sinar Harian pada Isnin.

Sementara itu, penduduk di Kampung Sri Andalas mendakwa kejadian banjir kilat pada Ahad merupakan kali pertama berlaku dan melanda kawasan itu di luar musim tengkujuh.

Seorang pemuda, Tajul Ikhwani menjangkakan jika keadaan itu tidak diatasi ia bakal menyebabkan banjir lebih buruk di kawasan terbabit pada musim tengkujuh kelak.

SINAR HARIAN ONLINE
TARIKH: 14 MEI 2024

Banjir kilat: Warga Puchong mahu jalan penyelesaian

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"Masa itu (banjir pada Ahad) air sudah hampir masuk ke bahagian tingkap rumah namun mujurlah hujan berhenti dan air mulai surut perlahan-lahan," katanya.

Pemuda terbabit turut menyiarkan keadaan banjir kilat secara langsung di laman Facebooknya dan mendapat pelbagai komen daripada netizen pada Ahad lalu.

Sementara itu, seorang lagi mangsa dari Kampung Sri Puchong, Riana Anasahri berkata, ketika banjir kilat berlaku dia berada di tempat kerja sekitar jam 5.30 petang.

"Saya berada di tempat kerja di Puchong Permai dan saya ingatkan banjir kilat berlaku di sini sahaja tetapi apabila tiba di rumah sewa saya, rupanya banjir juga.

"Ini kali pertama banjir melanda kawasan rumah sewa saya di Lorong 3 Jalan Mawar di Kampung Sri Puchong tahun ini," katanya kepada Sinar Harian pada Isnin.

Sementara itu, seorang wanita yang mahu dikenali sebagai Marliza berkata, kejadian banjir kilat pada Ahad lalu juga merupakan kejadian pertama berlaku di Puchong Intan.

Rata-rata penduduk yang ditemui turut memohon pihak berkuasa tempatan segera mencari solusi bagi mengurangkan impak apabila hujan lebat melanda kawasan itu.

Pada Ahad hujan lebat lebih kurang dua jam bermula sekitar jam 5.30 petang menyebabkan banjir kilat berlaku di beberapa kawasan di sekitar Puchong.

Antara kawasan didakwa teruk terjejas melibatkan laluan arah selatan dari Puchong Jaya ke IOI Puchong, Pangsapuri Seri Jati, Bandar Puteri dan Kampung Tengah.

SINAR HARIAN ONLINE
TARIKH: 14 MEI 2024

Selangor achieves 99% hike in Middle East tourist arrivals

■ BY JOSHUA PURUSHOTMAN
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KUALA LUMPUR: Selangor has seen a 99% surge in Middle East tourist arrivals in 2023, with top contributors being Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, which collectively contributed 79.13% out of the 176,711 tourist arrivals from there.

Tourism Selangor CEO Azrul Shah Mohamad said the growing interest from Middle Eastern tourists is a

testament to Selangor's allure and a sign of the "blooming friendship and mutual appreciation" between Selangor, Malaysia and Middle Eastern countries.

"Due to the growing Middle East market, we embarked on a sales mission to Dubai, which coincided with the Arabian Travel Market that was held from May 6 to 9.

"Our attendance at the event was spearheaded by Tourism Malaysia Dubai and served to fortify existing

bonds and explore new avenues for collaboration."

Azrul Shah said during the sales mission, Selangor cemented partnerships with key players in the Middle Eastern travel sector, including a groundbreaking collaboration with KPJ Healthcare to promote medical tourism in Selangor.

He said a strategic alliance with Middle East airlines has also enhanced connectivity, with 96 direct flights from countries in the

region to Selangor.

The flights, which had a capacity of 30,461 seats in 2022, involved AirArabia, Salam Air, Emirates Airline, Etihad Airways, Qatar Airways and others.

"These synergies will continue to pave the way for a series of cross-promotional endeavours that span from familiarisation trips to robust business to business opportunities that are poised to raise Selangor's tourism profile on the global stage."

Azrul Shah added that the Subang Jaya City Council, Sepang Municipal Council, Ampang Jaya Municipal Council, Petaling Jaya City Council and Shah Alam City Council received the highest number of Middle East tourists.

"Our foray into the Middle East aligns with Selangor's global tourism campaign, 'Splendid Selangor, Take Me Anywhere!', and we remain committed to fostering international collaborations."

(Sun 14/5/2024)

THE SUN
Tarikh: 14 MAY 2024

EPF contributions proposed for stringers

SUN 14/6

IPOH: The National Journalists Day celebration is a vital platform for media employees to share their opinions and challenges faced and to recognise the contributions of the group to society and the nation.

Perak Media Practitioners Association chairman Sayed Mohd Hesham Syed Idris proposed that contributions to the Employees Provident Fund and the Social Security Organisation, especially for stringers, be discussed in the upcoming event.

"Special incentives such as medical coverage and school assistance for the children of media (employees) in need should be considered as well.

"The welfare-related matters proposed at last year's National Journalists Day need to be implemented and if any have already been put into effect, they should be refined."

Sayed said despite being part-time journalists, stringers also play an essential role in the journalism industry. — Bernama



KEEPING COOL ... An employee at an electrical appliance shop in Marang, Terengganu arranging fans for sale outside the outlet. Fans and air conditioners have been selling well in the state due to the current hot and humid weather. — **BERNAMAPIC**

THE SUN
Tarikh: 14 MAY 2024

Economist deems call to accelerate AI ecosystem timely

KUALA LUMPUR: The call by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to hasten the pace in building an artificial intelligence (AI) nexus is timely as currently, any work towards this in Malaysia is minimal or non-existent, says economist Geoffrey Williams.

He said such an ecosystem is vital to ensure that Malaysia cultivates an ample AI workforce and effectively stimulates economic growth in the future.

Williams reckons that any research from Malaysia on developing AI applications is likely to be very small.

He said while there was an announcement that the government would look into establishing the first AI polytechnic in the country, most universities here are yet to have AI as part of their programmes and research, except perhaps in specific modules in their information technology (IT) departments.

"There are only ad hoc activities in AI at a relatively low level or early stage being carried out in Malaysia's universities. There is very little research, very little teaching and no significant attempt to look at the potential economic impact," he told Bernama.

Thus, he proposed local universities start adopting AI by prioritising training among academicians, while at the same time taking time to integrate AI into universities' curricula, which would help build the much-needed ecosystem for AI to succeed.

"To integrate AI into curricula, academics themselves must be proficient in AI and they are not. There are many opportunities to use AI for course development and content creation as well as for research but academics have simply not begun this process," he added.

The factors behind this are many, but some of

the most important include regulations that slow down the creation of new programmes, and a lack of awareness and training in AI among academics, he noted.

Williams also stressed that the government must conduct thorough research to create policies to deal with the impact of AI so that people thoroughly benefit from it.

Besides making the call to hasten the pace for an AI nexus in the country, Anwar, who is also the finance minister, launched the AI Talent Roadmap 2024-2030 and the Faculty of Artificial Intelligence and the Malaysian Artificial Intelligence Consortium (MAIC) on Friday.

He said the governance of the AI ecosystem must be systematic and have professional and skilled talents with AI working with multinational corporations and the MAIC pursuing the growth of AI.

THE SUN
Tarikh: 17 4 MAY 2024

Ringgit ends higher against US dollar

Sun 17/5

THE ringgit ended higher against the US dollar yesterday following a decline in the US Dollar Index (DXY), said an analyst.

At 6pm, the ringgit gained some ground versus the greenback to 4.7270/7320 from last Friday's close of 4.7385/7410.

Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid said the DXY fell to 105.221 points, which led to the weaker greenback.

He also said the market players would focus on the US inflation data with the Producer Price Index and the Consumer Price Index reports coming out on Tuesday and Wednesday.

At the current juncture, it is still a mixed feeling as the data points to a weaker prospect with consumer sentiments falling in May.

"The University of Michigan's survey of consumer sentiment index dropped for the second consecutive month to 67.4 points from 77.2 points in the prior month.

"However, the inflation expectation for next year has risen to 3.5% in May from 3.2% previously. As such, the inflation data in the US will be closely scrutinised this week," he told Bernama.

At the close, the ringgit traded higher against a basket of major currencies.

It appreciated versus the Japanese yen to 3.0325/0359 from last Friday's close of 3.0428/0446, improved vis-a-vis the British pound to 5.9215/9278 from 5.9364/9395 yesterday, and gained against the euro to 5.0967/1020 from 5.1072/1098 previously.

The local note also rose against Asean currencies.

The ringgit appreciated against the Singapore dollar to 3.4919/4959 from 3.5017/5038 at last Friday's close and gained against the Thai baht to 12.8388/8583 from 12.9009/9137 previously.

THE SUN
Tarikh: 11 4 MAY 2024

Pantas ready for Klang emergencies

By EDWARD RAJENDRA
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KLANG Royal City Council's (MBDK) Quick Response Team (Pantas) is geared up to face any eventuality arising from thunderstorms.

Klang mayor Datin Paduka Noraini Roslan assured that the men-in-blue, her codename for the Pantas team, were well prepared and would spring into action if the weather caused floods or trees to fall.

"Our team is trained to handle disaster mitigation and response strategies.

"MBDK's Pantas will be on 24-hour alert to monitor flood-prone areas.

"If a thunderstorm occurs, the team will immediately move to low-lying areas to keep watch," she said.

Noraini said the team under-

went training to respond within half an hour in view of extreme weather that could bring intense rains and strong winds.

"Within Pantas, there is a small team for emergency response in case of a disaster.

"It is crucial to have this team as they are trained to make quick assessment of the situation and deliver the report," said Noraini.

"There are a total of 24 people in six teams, operating in shifts.

"Each shift will see two teams, where one team will patrol north Klang while the other will patrol south Klang.

"We have three shifts, mid-night to 8am, 8am to 5pm and 3pm to midnight," she said.

She further said that for south Klang, areas identified for patrols or to keep watch on were Bandar Putera, Bandar Puteri, Sentosa, Taman Selat

Damai, Taman Melawis, Simpang Lima and Jalan Tengku Kelana.

For north Klang, under watch are Bandar Bukit Raja, Jalan Meru, Pekan Meru and Batu Belah.

"Other areas are observed through closed-circuit television cameras and via calls from the public as well as by monitoring posts on social media from time to time," she added.

On the drainage network that ran along low-lying plains, Noraini said MBDK's Environmental Services Department had carried out drain flushing and cleaning in flood-prone areas.

"Drains need to be free of obstructions as it is crucial to prevent floods.

"We urge the people to work with the city council to ensure drains right outside their houses



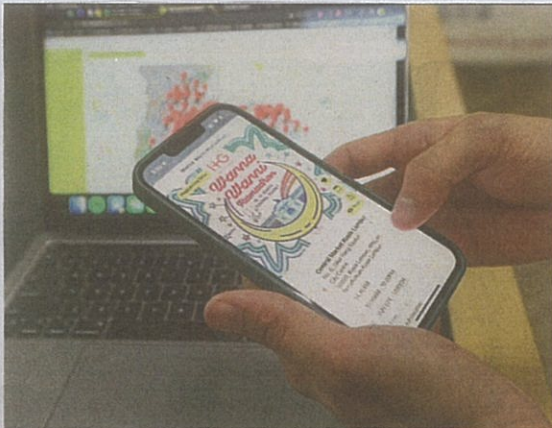
Pantas personnel helping a family in Klang move belongings from their water-inundated home. — Courtesy of MBDK

are free of litter," she said.

Noraini added that KDEB Waste Management Sdn Bhd workers would be told to follow the drain cleaning schedule for

residential areas that required cleaning on the second and fourth week of the month, to ensure smooth water flow and avoid clogging.

THE STAR
14 MAY 2024
Tarikh:



Project Genie will be rolled out soon.

Innovation for better life

Grantees unveil new systems for transforming waste, connectivity, mobility to explore city's attractions

By JAROD LIM
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AN INNOVATION which uses Black Soldier Fly (BSF) larvae to break down food waste is making the adage "one man's trash is another man's treasure," a reality.

Entomal Biotech Sdn Bhd, a Malaysia-based biotechnology company, said its patented system reduced the amount of food waste ending up in landfills or being incinerated, which worsened greenhouse gas emissions.

Its chief commercial officer Yanni Ching said the Entomal Mobile Bioconversion System (EMBC) allowed the BSF larvae to consume food waste slurry to produce nutrient-rich insect protein for pet food and organic fertiliser for farmers.

"The process starts with gathering food waste and grinding it into a slurry before injecting BSF larvae into the mix."

"The larvae would consume the food slurry and produce frass, which is made into organic fertilisers for farmers, while the insects can be used as animal feed - making it into a circular economy."

"We have estimated an EMBC to be able to reduce 28 tonnes of carbon dioxide emission per year," she said.

Co-founded by brothers Thomas and Vic Pui, Entomal BioTech is one of the eight winners of the Creative KL Grants Programme and Urban Challenge.

The programme by Think City aims to improve the liveability of the city centre by sourcing innovative solutions and leveraging its expertise and co-investment in projects.

The top three winners received RM200,000, one of which is Entomal, while another five projects received consolation prizes of RM40,000.

The programme is aligned with the Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District (KLCCD)

Strategic Master Plan's vision to create inclusive, creative, and viable cultural places within the city to enhance liveability and visitor attraction.

Ching said the technology behind ensuring the BSF larvae supply was what set them apart from other food waste treatment operators.

"We have a certain way to ensure the reproductivity of BSF in our laboratory."

"We also add in a certain formula to the food waste to reduce odour and break the food particles for the larvae's easy consumption," said Ching.

Unlike the common fly, BSF solely grows to reproduce and has the ability to repel other insects, she explained.

"So BSF are not pests as they do not sting and don't spread harmful pathogens," she added.

Currently, Entomal has four EMBC units operating in the Klang Valley.

The pioneer EMBC was done through a tri-partnership with Taylors University in Subang Jaya, and Impact Circle, an agri-foodtech ecosystem builder and multiplier, which allowed Taylor's Bachelor of Science in Culinary programme students to conduct research on the by-products.

"The others are located at Section 2 Community Centre, Shah Alam, a partnership with Shah Alam City Council as well as one each at Sunway Lagoon and Le Meridien Petaling Jaya," said Ching.

She said they had secured another location at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in Jalan Hang Jebat, Kuala Lumpur.

"We are in the midst of identifying vendors, determining how the food waste will be collected as well as finalising the location for our EMBC (at the YWCA)."

"We hope to launch it this month and we will also conduct education and awareness on the treatment processes with



Members of the public enjoying an outing on Tryke ebikes. — Photos: SHAARI CHE MAT, LOW LAY PHON and WILLIAM GARY/The Star



(From left) Thomas, Vic and Ching holding the BSF larvae at the EMBC at Taylors Lakeside University.

the community.

"At the same time, we also created job opportunities for B40 women to run the EMBC and empower them," she added.

Ching hoped to have 15 EMBC units in the Klang Valley in the next 12 months.

The company intends to collab-

orate with hotels, shopping centres, amusement parks, and property developers.

"Ultimately, we want to raise funds to set up a Central Biowaste Conversion Plant that treats 15 tonnes of food waste daily."

"Although this is considerably

small compared to the 17,000 tonnes of daily food waste Malaysians produce, it is a first step towards tackling climate change," she said.

Unlocking KL's attractions

Another top winner of the



Wong (right) and his team posing with the e-scooters, a bicycle and motorcycle.

under The Creative KL Grants Programme and Urban Challenge.

The free, user-generated platform also allows partnering vendors to promote events of public interest while users can access the details using Genie, said Wong. "Using artificial intelligence, Genie captures vendors' event announcements online and repackages them into organised information."

"Users who are interested in the events can then visit the venues and establishments using Tryke application, our shared mobility service that was launched in 2019."

"Via the shared mobility service, the public can rent lightweight electric vehicles (EV) ranging from electric scooters and electric bicycles to electric mopeds to travel between destinations," he said.

Wong said Project Genie was about 80% ready.

"The Beta version of the application was available since December last year. We are expecting its full roll-out soon."

"There are about 5,000 users in Genie now and we are constantly collecting feedback and data on how our users are interacting with the Genie."

"Ultimately, we want a seamless integration with all the different kinds of mobility services, including third-party transportation options like buses such as

"Kuala Lumpur has so much to offer, but art, culture or history-related events are not widely known to the public."

Timothy Wong

RapidKL, ride-hailing services and others," he added.

Tackling commuter connectivity

Commuters who find it a hassle getting to and from stations or terminals can look forward to the expansion of the demand-responsive transit (DRT) services called Trek Rides in downtown Kuala Lumpur.

Asia Mobiliti, Malaysia's mobility-as-a-service company, has set its sights on revolutionising urban transportation with the DRT services.

Its chief executive and co-founder Ramachandran Muniandy said the service fulfilled demand for the first- and last-mile connectivity in a particular area.

He said the on-demand shared rides were focused on smaller areas where passengers would be picked up and dropped off at specific locations near or within walking distance to their destinations.



KL commuters can look forward to more DRT services in the second quarter of this year.



Ramachandran (left) riding on the DRT with other passengers.

Ramachandran said DRT was not the same as hailing services that ferry passengers from door to door.

"It does not follow sequential booking, where those who book first will be dropped off first, regardless of the route."

"For DRT, the passenger headed to a nearer destination on a similar route will be dropped off first instead," he said.

Trek Rides DRT Services have been operating in four different zones.

The service is available in Puchong, Ampang, UPM-Serdang and Hulu Kelang in Selangor as well as Universiti Malaya-Bangsar South, in Kuala Lumpur.

The services offered in Selangor are in collaboration with Selangor government, as part of the state's mobility initiative.

Currently, about four 15-seater or 19-seater vans operate in each zone for 16 hours daily and each passenger is charged RM2 per ride.

"Primarily, each DRT zone covers about 10sq km and it takes into account optimal navigation and routing to avoid traffic congestion, achieving a 15-minute average travelling time at peak and non-peak periods."

"Passengers can book a ride via the mobile application and get to a stop near their destination or an LRT station," said Ramachandran.

The Trek Rides mobile application also has a journey feature that allows users to plan their route by incorporating different transport modes.

"Some of the safety features include Electronic-Know-Your-

Customers (eKYC) requiring passengers to register their identification and booking numbers for each ride's booking in the Trek mobile application."

Ramachandran said the DRT service was expected to be launched in the second quarter of the year in Kuala Lumpur.

"Only 21% of all trips into Kuala Lumpur are via public transport, a low number if we intend for the city to be sustainable."

"Currently, we are in the midst of identifying partners and launching this DRT service in downtown Kuala Lumpur to complement the existing public transport options," he said, adding that they received RM40,000 from the Think City grant.

Ramachandran said they planned to integrate with the city transport network by adding GoKL buses and other public transport as well as incorporating Tryke shared scooter and bicycle services in the near future.

"What we like to do next is to come out with ride passes for frequent active users to enjoy unlimited rides."

"Ultimately, we want it to be self-sustainable by unlocking non-fare revenue like advertisements and partnerships with other companies," he added.

Ramachandran envisioned that this would change how Malaysians and tourists discover the city by taking Trek Rides around downtown Kuala Lumpur.

"We would like to incorporate tourism components to include points of interest in the city, by engaging with hotels and vendors," he said.



BSF do not sting and don't spread harmful pathogens, according to Ching.

grant is Tryke Transportation Sdn Bhd, which is Malaysia's e-scooter service provider.

Under Project Genie, users can check events happening in Kuala Lumpur all under one application.

Tryke founder Timothy Wong said the idea stemmed from people spending less time exploring the city mainly due to the low awareness of all the activities and events in the city.

"Our data reveals that since 2021, necessity-driven commuters have increased by 100%, but those travelling for leisure have dropped by 85% over the same period."

"This means that people primarily come to the city centre to work rather than to explore the city."

"In fact, Kuala Lumpur has so much to offer, but art, culture or history-related events are not widely known to the public."

Tryke received RM200,000

Urgent call to preserve KL's flood defences

DBKL
JTW
14/5

By BAVANI M
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ENVIRONMENTAL experts are urging the government to curb any form of development taking place at Kuala Lumpur's flood retention ponds, as these are critical to the city's flood defence strategy and integral to its overall flood mitigation.

"It is time to bolster our defences against climate change, as the weather we are witnessing now is unprecedented and unpredictable," said former National Water Research Institute of Malaysia (Nahrim) director-general Datuk Nor Hisham Mohd Ghazali.

With the volume of rainfall the city was now experiencing in a single day, he said the response capacity of relevant government agencies was severely strained.

"Our city's water bodies and retention ponds are currently our best defences and must be diligently protected and preserved.

"Let's not undermine the capacity of ponds such as Batu, Bohol, Bunus and Taman Desa to function effectively.

"These ponds do not operate in isolation as they are part of a comprehensive flood mitigation system that works in concert," he emphasised.

StarMetro reported on a tender notice by the Federal Territories of Kuala Lumpur Lands and Mines Office (PTGWP), which called for bids to design and upgrade the 63.45ha Bohol flood retention pond in Seputeh for a housing project.

Following that decision, the Attorney General's Chambers published a notice in the Federal Government Gazette on May 8, announcing the proposed revocation of the land reservation for public purposes under Section 64 (2) of the National Land Code (Act 828) for Lot

With rising climate threats, experts want agencies to adapt approaches to tackle situation



Flash flood in Kajang, Selangor earlier this month. — Courtesy of Khidmat Malaysia

35309 measuring 24.79ha.

Nor Hisham said the proposed development threatened to diminish the pond's capacity to mitigate future floods, evidenced by flash floods in parts of Taman Kinrara in 2021 and 2022.

He said the floods could have been prevented or at least mitigated had the Bohol flood retention pond been properly maintained.

Nor Hisham, formerly director-general of the Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID), said last week's thunderstorm that caused a rain tree to fall, killing a motorist and trapping three people in their vehicles, illustrated the severe impact of climate change.

"This incident is a stark reminder of the serious implications of climate change and why the city can no longer depend solely on historical data for flood

mitigation," he pointed out.

"We used to rely on statistical data from the past 50 to 100 years, the Average Recurrence Intervals (ARIs), to predict flooding events.

"ARIs help estimate the frequency of events like heavy rainfall or river discharge levels.

"Historically, this data suggested certain events would happen once or twice a year, such as an ARI 100 or ARI 200 event.

"However, as we saw in 2021 when all our rainfall stations in the Klang Valley recorded rainfall exceeding ARI 100, these predictions are no longer reliable," said Nor Hisham.

"We need to enhance our defences to a level that can withstand such events, as the patterns are evolving and we cannot merely blame climate change.

"We must adapt our

approach," he said.

GEC River Care programme manager Dr Kalithasan Kailasam echoed Nor Hisham's sentiments, stressing that water bodies must remain untouched.

"We need to allow space for rainwater accumulation and avoid overburdening our rivers," said Kalithasan.

Institute of Geology Malaysia president Abd Rasid Jaapar warned against the proposed development of the Bohol flood retention pond, emphasising the need for careful reassessment of land historically prone to flooding.

"The recent proposal to develop an area that has been gazetted as a flood retention zone, is alarming.

"Such decisions must thoroughly consider the historical context of the area to avoid repeating past mistakes,"



Nor Hisham says authorities can no longer blame climate change and need to adapt approaches.



Abd Rasid warns against the proposed development of the Bohol flood retention pond.

"We need to allow space for rainwater accumulation and avoid overburdening our rivers."

Dr Kalithasan Kailasam

Abd Rasid said.

"Federal and state agencies, including DID and DBKL (Kuala Lumpur City Hall) must improve communication and collaborate beyond political differences to ensure that policies on climate change are effectively implemented at the local level," he added.

Wildlife still in danger

Report: Illegal trade a global threat despite Covid-19 disruptions

By CHARLES RAMENDRAN
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PETALING JAYA : Despite the lockdown and disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, trafficking and illicit trade of protected wildlife species continue to pose a significant threat to biodiversity worldwide.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) third edition of the World Wildlife Crime Report 2024, the pandemic had a mixed impact on wildlife trafficking.

The report, released yesterday, said that while there was a notable reduction in trafficking from personal baggage in air transport due to travel restrictions and seizures, information suggested that the overall trafficking levels did not see a significant decline.

It found action against illegal wildlife trade increased from 2017 onwards, hitting its peak during the pandemic period between 2020 and 2021.

The findings, including data

from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora Annual Illegal Trade Reports, revealed a staggering 140,000 wildlife seizure incidents involving some 4,000 plant and animal species between 2015 and 2021.

The estimated seizures involved 13 million items weighing over 16,000 tonnes during the seven-year period.

The illegal items were meant for a wide range of sectors including food, medicine, live animal and plant keeping, and as "luxury" goods.

Despite the significant number of seizures, the UNODC said these figures likely represented only a fraction of actual wildlife trafficking activities with the true scale of the illegal trade being far larger.

It said the pandemic also caused disruptions to enforcement actions and shifts in trafficking methods which potentially could have led to under reporting.

"While the Covid-19 pandemic

has reshaped some aspects of wildlife trafficking, the underlying challenges remain," the UNODC said.

The report said enforcement efforts had increased globally over the past two decades with many countries forming specialised units, multi-agency teams and national strategies to combat wildlife crime.

But assessing the impact of enforcement measures remains challenging.

However, findings showed that the clamping down on trafficking of high-profile commodities such as elephant ivory and rhinoceros horn had shown progress over the past decade, with poaching, seizure levels and market prices sharply declining, although occasional large seizures of both commodities continue to occur.

The UNODC also emphasised the need for consistent vigilance and collaboration at national, regional and international levels to address wildlife trafficking effectively.

"Addressing wildlife trafficking requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach which include strengthening enforcement, recognising underlying socio-economic drivers and enhancing international cooperation to combat corruption and illicit financial flows," UNODC said.

In Malaysia, a steep decrease of over 60% in wildlife poaching and trafficking was recorded during the pandemic mainly due to the movement control order (MCO) in 2020 and 2021, according to the Wildlife and National Parks Department (Perhilitan).

It said apart from the MCO, the National Task Force was formed, comprising 19 enforcement agencies to counter wildlife crimes under an operation codenamed Ops Bersepadu Khazanah.

It made a significant impact when more than 350 people were detained and RM36mil worth of protected and endangered animals, their body parts and flora were seized.

THE STAR

11 4 MAY 2024

Tarikh:.....

Free or subsidised flu jabs in the offing

By FAZLEENA AZIZ
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PUTRAJAYA: Free or subsidised influenza vaccination for vulnerable groups may be a reality here following the Health Ministry's (MOH) plan to request for an allocation in Budget 2025 and beyond, says the Health Minister.

Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the vaccines could be part of the National Immunisation Programme.

"We will try our best to ask for this allocation. But as usual, we still have our priorities and look at the (overall) cost. We are aware that those in the elderly group are exposed to such risk. We will try to get it done especially for those aged 65 years and above.

"This is still under consideration in our request for Budget 2025 and the coming years," he said after the National Immunisation Day celebration and the National Immunisation Summit 2024 here yesterday.

Dzulkefly said the one-dose vaccine would be given yearly, adding that as influenza-causing viruses tend to mutate, recipients would need updated vaccines every year.



Currently, the national immunisation coverage for babies and children is over 95% for most major vaccines under the programme, an achievement certified by the World Health Organisation.

Also present at the event were Health director-general Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan; MOH deputy secretary-general

(Management) Datuk Zainal Alhakab Seman, Immunise4life Programme Technical Committee chairman Prof Datuk Dr Zulkifli Ismail and MOH Family Health Development division director Dr Mohd Safiee Ismail.

On MOH's comprehensive Human Resource Master Plan to address health facilities, Dzulkefly said it would require inter-

ministerial collaboration to compile all the necessary resources.

"It is at the development stage and will be part of our mid- and long-term plans," he said in his speech, which also touched on the approval for the use of the diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis combination vaccine (DTaP) for expectant mothers.

DTaP is expected to be given out

Rapt attention: A participant looking at a banner on immunisation during the National Immunisation Day celebration at Zenith Putrajaya Hotel. — AZMAN GHANI/The Star

at the end of the year to protect newborns from pertussis, also known as whooping cough, with data showing that there is significant risk of newborns contracting the disease if this protection is not given.

Pertussis can cause uncontrollable, severe coughing that makes it hard to breathe, eat or drink, which makes it extremely serious for babies and young children.

If untreated, it may lead to pneumonia, convulsions, brain damage or even death.

In teens and adults, it can cause loss of bladder control, passing out and rib fractures from severe coughing.

On the Khazanah Research Institute's study titled "Digital Health Records in Malaysia: The Journey and the Way Forward", Dzulkefly said it was high time for the healthcare system to be digitised, especially with the electronic medical records (EMR) system.

"Yes, I read the Khazanah study. We need to get digitised not only for the ageing society but we have to care for every citizen, from baby to adult, as all will benefit from the EMR.

"This is my commitment and also the ministry's."

THE STAR

14 MAY 2024

Tarikh:.....

Crowds throng EPF as Account 3 kicks in

PETALING JAYA: Members of the public went in droves to Employees Provident Fund (EPF) offices to get more information on or opt in for Account 3 after its introduction.

Under a restructuring plan that took effect on May 11, EPF accounts are split from two to three for members aged below 55.

A survey by Bernama saw long queues at the Jalan Raja Laut EPF branch in Kuala Lumpur early yesterday.

In NILAI, Negri Sembilan, people were trying to get their transaction authentication codes or attempting to update their details at the EPF branch office, according to *Utusan Malaysia*.

Sabtariah Muldani, 41, took a day off from work just to show up at the office as she had failed to opt in for Account 3 when it was launched last Saturday.

"I took a day off just to settle matters related to EPF Account 3 here," she told the daily.

In ALOR SETAR, 33-year-old Noor Zanariah Yaakob said she and her two friends went to the local EPF office to get details on Account 3, *Kosmo!* reported.

"I came to the office because I wasn't sure how to transfer money from Akaun Sejahtera (Account 2).

"Fortunately, we were given clear instructions, so now all we have to do is wait for the money to be transferred into the Flexible Account," she said.

In KUALA TERENGGANU, Jacob Md Ali said he was eager to transfer his money to Account 3 so he could fund his eldest child's tertiary education.

"His Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia results will be out on May 27 and I hope he'll be able to pursue his desired course within the next few months," said the 48-year-old.

With the restructuring of EPF accounts, the monthly contribution of members would be divided by 75%, 15% and 10%, and channelled to Accounts 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

However, contributors are only allowed to withdraw up to RM250 per day.

According to an update posted in EPF's i-Akaun application, the minimum sum members can withdraw per day from the flexible account is RM50.



Smooth process: EPF employee Tengku Shiena Tengku Hamzah guiding an EPF member through the process of transferring funds into Account 3 at the Petaling Jaya branch. — AZHAR MAHFOF/The Star

THE STAR

144 MAY 2024

Tarikh:.....

More care workers expected as M'sia becomes ageing nation Jaya 14/5

By ARFA YUNUS
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PUTRAJAYA: The number of care workers is expected to go up in view of Malaysia's status as an ageing society in 2030, says the Women, Family and Community Development Minister.

Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri said the ministry had trained 655 people since 2018 with this year's target set at 385.

"We will discuss if we need

more because the private sector wants to participate as well. Perhaps they can function in a similar way as our institution in training them," she told reporters after launching the Care Industry Action Plan Development Lab in Malaysia here yesterday.

Nancy said the ministry aimed to make elder care a professional career.

On care workers' training, she said the programmes would cover

technical skills and academic modules.

There would be a balanced approach to ensure their effectiveness as caregivers, she said.

"They need to take up modules at university so that their training is not just technical, but also involves theory, which means they understand what they are doing.

"Currently, we will enhance their knowledge up to the diploma level," she said.

To protect senior citizens, other vulnerable groups and care workers, Nancy said the ministry would review laws on care worker practices to determine whether amendments were needed.

"The ministry will re-examine certain Acts that involve care such as the Child Care Centre Act 1984 and the Care Centres Act 1993, which are both over 30 years old," she said.

She also said that the Care Industry Action Plan was expect-

ed to be completed by July.

Currently, she said the ministry together with stakeholders and industry players would continue to engage each other through the Development Lab, a platform for them to air concerns and suggestions regarding the Care Industry Action Plan.

Malaysia is expected to transition to the status of ageing nation in 2030 when 15.3% of its population is expected to be aged 60 and above.

THE STAR

11 4 MAY 2021

Tarikh:.....

Kenderaan polis pengiring jenis Proton X70 pecah cermin dan kemek

Oleh HISYAMUDDIN
AYUB dan AHMAD
ISMADI ISMAIL
KUALA LUMPUR

Hujan lebat serta angin kuat menyebabkan sebatang pokok tumbang dan hampir menimpa kenderaan Ketua Menteri Melaka, Datuk Seri Ab Rauf Yusoh di Jalan Pinang, dekat sini jam 3.26 petang pada Isnin.

Bagaimanapun pokok yang tumbang itu tidak mengenai kenderaan yang dinaikinya Ab Rauf, namun kereta polis pengiring jenis Proton X70 yang berada hadapan sekali terkena pokok yang tumbang.

Ketua Polis Kuala Lumpur, Datuk Rusdi Mohd Isa mengesahkan kejadian itu dan pihaknya ada menerima laporan pokok tumbang tersebut.

Beliau berkata, kejadian po-

Kereta Ketua Menteri Melaka nyaris dihempap pokok

Sinar 14/5 (DBKL)



kok tumbang berhadapan Kuwait Bank itu hampir mengenai kenderaan Ketua Menteri Melaka yang mempunyai urusan kerja di Kuala Lumpur.

"Tiga buah kereta orang awam dan lima buah motosikal termasuk sebuah kenderaan Polis Diraja Malaysia (PDRM) yang bertindak sebagai konvoi kereta pengiring Ketua Menteri Melaka terlibat dalam kejadian pokok tumbang tersebut," katanya dalam satu kenyataan pada Isnin.

Pegawai Media Ketua Menteri Melaka, Shahnor Samsudin, dilaporkan berkata, ketika kejadian, rombongan Ab Rauf yang juga Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri (ADUN) Tanjung Bidara sedang melalui kawasan tersebut untuk menghadiri satu urusan rasmi di ibu kota.

"Kejadian pokok tumbang berlaku depan mata. Lokasi di Jalan Pinang berhampiran KLCC, hampir kena kereta bos (Ab Rauf)," ujarnya.

Katanya, anggota yang berada dalam kenderaan selamat, bagaimanapun cermin belakang kereta pengiring pecah dan keadaan bahagian belakang kereta juga kemek.

Tambahnya, sebelum kejadian, dia dan pegawai yang lain di dalam kenderaan terdengar satu bunyi kuat, seakan-akan sesuatu mahu jatuh dan tumbang.

"Kebetulan ketika kejadian saya dan pegawai lain sedang berborak tentang pokok tumbang sebab keadaan masa tu memang hujan yang sangat lebat.

"Sekelip mata sahaja betul-betul jadi depan mata dan hampir terkena kereta kenderaan pelbagai guna Toyota Vellfire warna merah depan kami," katanya.



Kejadian pokok tumbang yang berlaku di Jalan Pinang, Kuala Lumpur pada petang Isnin.

Sementara itu, Menteri di Jabatan Perdana Menteri (Wilayah Persekutuan) Dr Zaliha Mustafa mengarahkan Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL) mengambil tindakan segera dengan me-

nebang pokok yang berisiko tinggi di Kuala Lumpur.

Ia susulan berlaku insiden pokok tumbang pada Isnin yang hanya berselang seminggu dari kejadian di Jalan Sultan Ismail.

SINAR HARIAN
Tarikh: 14 MAY 2024

Akaun Fleksibel: Pencarum serbu pejabat KWSP hingga kaunter ditutup

Sinar 14/5

SHAH ALAM - Orang ramai membantiri pejabat Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja (KWSP) Seksyen 15 di sini pada Isnin sehingga kaunter ditutup jam 4.30 petang bagi membuat permohonan melakukan pemindahan wang daripada Akaun Sejahtera ke Akaun Fleksibel.

Tinjauan *Sinar Harian* mendapati ramai pencarum datang ke kaunter bagi mengemas kini nombor telefon bimbit untuk urusan kod pengesahan transaksi (TAC) selain membuat pertanyaan lanjut prosedur akaun berkenaan.

Pencarum, Marina Ibrahim, 40, berkata, walaupun pendaftaran boleh dibuat secara dalam talian, dia terpaksa ke kaunter KWSP bagi mengemas kini nombor telefon bimbit untuk urusan TAC.

"Saya datang untuk menukar nombor telefon dalam sistem bagi membuat permohonan dalam talian.

"Lagipun saya kurang jelas berkenaan pengeluaran wang daripada akaun dua (Sejahtera) ke akaun tiga (Fleksibel), jadi sekarang saya sudah tahu bagaimana proses yang sebenar," katanya.

Suri rumah yang mahu dikenali sebagai Annakili, 48, pula berkata, walaupun sudah mendaftar secara dalam talian, dia masih mempunyai kekeliruan terhadap proses caruman wang ke Akaun Fleksibel.

Katanya, selain mendapatkan maklumat lanjut berkenaan caruman, dia turut mengambil



ANNAKILI



SHARIFAH MIMPA

peluang untuk memeriksa baki simpanan.

"Sebenarnya, saya tidak jelas berkenaan pengeluaran wang daripada akaun dua ke akaun tiga, jadi sebab itulah saya datang untuk tanya bagaimana proses yang sebenar," ujarnya.

Pekerja swasta, Sharifah Mimpa Manap, 40, pula hadir di pejabat KWSP bagi mengemas kini kata laluan TAC untuk membuat permohonan pengeluaran berkenaan.

Menurutnya, pembukaan Akaun Fleksibel sedikit sebanyak dapat membantu dirinya merancang kewangan dengan lebih baik untuk kegunaan kecemasan.

Sementara itu, berbeza dengan Ahmed Zareef Nur Abdul Malek, 33, yang belum lagi berniat untuk mendaftar Akaun Fleksibel.

"Tempoh permohonan dibuka pun masih panjang, jika saya berubah fikiran senang untuk berbuat demikian nanti," katanya yang bekerja sendiri.

KWSP memperkenalkan Akaun Fleksibel bagi membolehkan ahli mereka mengeluarkan simpanan pada bila-bila masa untuk sebarang tujuan, tertakluk kepada amaun minimum pengeluaran sebanyak RM50.

Ahli boleh membuat pilihan pindahan amaun permulaan bermula 12 Mei sehingga 31 Ogos 2024 dan ia hanya boleh dibuat sekali sahaja pada bila-bila masa sepanjang tempoh tersebut serta tidak boleh dibatalkan.

SINAR HARIAN

Tarikh: 14 MAY 2024

Keluar wang untuk modal niaga, tampung belanja kahwin



ORANG ramai beratur panjang di pejabat KWSP Sungai Petani untuk mendapatkan maklumat lanjut berkaitan Akaun Fleksibel semalam.

ALOR GAJAH – Keputusan kerajaan memperkenalkan Akaun Fleksibel bukan sahaja memberi kemudahan kepada pencarum mengeluarkan wang simpanan ketika kecemasan, malah turut membuka peluang kepada orang ramai mencari modal bagi membuka perniagaan kecil-kecilan.

Seorang pencarum, T. Gunasegaran, 39, berkata, dia mahu mengeluarkan RM1,000 dari Akaun Fleksibel untuk membeli barang dapur, persekolahan anak dan berniaga secara kecil-kecilan.

Katanya, dia yang sudah tidak bekerja akibat kemalangan jalan raya beberapa bulan lalu sangat

mengharapkan wang tambahan yang dapat digunakan untuk memperbaiki ekonomi keluarga.

"Saya mahu mencari modal untuk memulakan perniagaan menjual sayur dan buah-buahan. Duit ini juga akan digunakan untuk beli barang dapur dan perbelanjaan persekolahan anak.

"Kalau boleh, biarlah had pengeluaran harian sebanyak RM250 dinaikkan sedikit supaya kami tidak perlu datang ke kaunter untuk membuat pengesahan identiti," katanya.

Di **Ipoh, Perak**, seorang wanita dikenali Ida, 22, mengakui mahu mengeluarkan wang dari Akaun Fleksibel bagi menam-

pung perbelanjaan untuk persiapan perkahwinannya.

"Saya memang perlukan duit untuk belanja perkahwinan pada 1 Jun ini," katanya yang bekerja sebagai pembantu kedai.

Seorang lagi pencarum, Hamdan Ali, 48, berkata, dia hadir ke pejabat Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja (KWSP) semalam kerana tidak memahami proses untuk mengeluarkan duit daripada aplikasi KWSP.

"Saya datang seawal pukul 7 pagi. Rakyat memang perlukan duit kerana bulan lepas duit habis digunakan untuk belanja persekolahan dan persiapan hari raya," katanya.

KOSMO

14 MAY 2024

Tarikh:



PEJABAT KWSP di Jalan Raja Laut, Kuala Lumpur, diserbu orang ramai yang mahu membuat pengesahan identiti dan kemas kini maklumat berkenaan Akaun Fleksibel. - FARIZ RUSADIO

'Saya perlukan duit'

PETALING JAYA - Keperluan mendesak terutama dalam urusan perbelanjaan harian menyaksikan para pencarum Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja (KWSP) sanggup beratur panjang dan datang seawal pukul 7 pagi ke pejabat KWSP di seluruh negara bagi urusan mengeluarkan duit melalui Akaun Fleksibel.

Rata-rata pencarum mengakui, mereka tidak mahu menunggu lama untuk membuat permohonan pemindahan wang dari Akaun Sejahtera ke Akaun Fleksibel bagi membolehkan pengeluaran wang dibuat.

Menurut pencarum, mereka juga lebih selesa berurusan di pejabat KWSP berbanding meng-

gunakan kaedah online bagi pengeluaran melebihi RM250.

Di **George Town, Pulau Pinang**, seorang operator kilang, Norlina Abd Rahim, 44, berkata, dia menganggap kemudahan yang diberikan kerajaan menerusi Akaun Fleksibel merupakan satu keputusan yang baik di saat ramai rakyat sedang berdepan kenaikan kos sara hidup.

Katanya, dia sendiri sanggup datang seawal pukul 7 pagi ke pejabat KWSP di Bayan Baru untuk mendapatkan pengesahan cap jari bagi pengeluaran wang sebanyak RM1,000 yang perlu melalui proses electronic Know-Your-Customer (e-KYC).

"Ingatkan saya antara orang

paling awal tiba sebelum pintu kaunter dibuka, rupanya ramai yang sudah beratur panjang.

"Saya memang mahu keluaran wang lebih daripada RM250 kerana ada urusan kecemasan yang perlu diselesaikan.

"Kami sudah tiada alternatif lain dan ini adalah peluang terakhir untuk keluaran wang hasil caruman KWSP," katanya.

Di **Sungai Petani, Kedah**, seorang pencarum, Shahriza Shamsuddin, 38, menyifatkan Akaun Fleksibel sebagai 'penyelamat' kepada keluarganya.

Katanya, sebagai pencarum tetap sejak 20 tahun lalu, ini adalah saat yang ditunggu-tunggu untuk dia mengeluarkan sedikit

wang untuk kegunaan keluarga.

"Dalam keadaan harga barang semakin naik dan ekonomi tidak menentu, sekurang-kurangnya wang KWSP itu dapat menjadi pembantu kami.

"Saya mahu pindahkan wang ke Akaun Fleksibel bagi memudahkan urusan pengeluaran selepas ini," katanya.

Bagi Nur Fatin Abdul Aziz, 36, pula, dia sememangnya berharap KWSP membenarkan pengeluaran wang bagi membolehkan pencarum seperti dirinya membuat perancangan.

"Akaun Fleksibel ini sangat baik dan selain dijadikan simpanan untuk persediaan persekolahan anak-anak, ia juga boleh

digunakan jika keadaan terdesak kerana boleh dikeluarkan pada bila-bila masa," ujarnya.

Di **Johor Bahru, Johor**, rata-rata pencarum teruja untuk membuat kemas kini akaun KWSP masing-masing bagi urusan pengeluaran Akaun Fleksibel.

"Kalau ikutkan, RM250 sehari sudah cukup sebenarnya sebagai tabung simpanan untuk kecemasan seperti anak sakit ataupun kenderaan rosak.

"Dengan keadaan ekonomi tidak menentu sekarang dan ditambah harga barang naik, duit yang dikeluarkan ini boleh digunakan untuk belanja dapur," jelas Siti Asiah Muda, 35.

KOSMO

11 4 MAY 2024

Tarikh:

Kuala Lumpur

'Conteng arang ke muka PDRM'

Bekas anggota polis mengaku terima rasuah RM6,000 untuk menutup fail satu kes cabul

"Mahkamah menerima pengakuan bersalah. Terduduh bersalah dan disabitkan kesalahan sebagaimana pertuduhan pilihan.

Reseksaan yang membawa hukuman penjara hingga dua tahun atau denda atau ke-dua-dua-

“Saya juga menang-
gung dua
anak dan
perlu

"Faktor kepentingan awam antara pertimbangan utama mahkamah dalam memutuskan hukuman yang sesuai terhadap tertuduh," katanya.

Suapan sebagai balasan tak ambil tindakan terhadap seorang lelaki atas kesalahan cabul

Usaha imbangi kelemahan ringgit

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Kuala Lumpur: Usaha secara kolektif seperti meningkatkan produktiviti pengeluaran, menggalakkan penggunaan barangan buatan tempatan, melancong dalam negara dan tidak menghantar pelajar ke luar negara bagi kursus ijazah boleh mengimbangi kesan kelemahan ringgit, kata Tan Sri Dr Sulaiman Mahbob.

Ahli Lembaga Pengarah Institut Penyelidikan Ekonomi Malaysia (MIER) itu berkata, usaha sedemikian secara tidak langsung akan meningkatkan lagi daya saing ekonomi negara di tengah-tengah persekitaran ekonomi global yang mencabar.

Beliau yang juga Pengerusi Lembaga Pembangunan Pelaburan Malaysia (Mida) berkata, peningkatan produktiviti membolehkan syarikat di negara ini mendapat pasaran yang lebih baik dan menjana pengeluaran yang lebih tinggi.

Jelasnya, pengeluaran yang tinggi akan merancakkan aktiviti ekonomi, sekali gus menyumbang kepada pertumbuhan ekonomi negara.

"Bagi mengatasi kesan kelemahan ringgit, menggalakkan penggunaan barangan dan perkhidmatan tempatan seperti pelancongan dalam negeri juga akan membantu.

"Dari segi industri pula, boleh mengguna bahan tempatan sebagai input dan meninjau input dalam mata wang yang nilainya lebih rendah," katanya bagi mengulas usaha yang boleh



DR Sulaiman

dilaksanakan untuk meningkatkan lagi daya saing negara dan menangani kesan kelemahan ringgit berbanding dolar AS.

Beliau berkata demikian kepada media di bawah Kumpulan The New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd (NSTP) sempena kunjungannya ke ibu pejabat NSTP yang disambut mesra oleh Timbalan Pengarang Kumpulan Berita Harian (BH), M Thilindan di sini, semalam.

Mengulas lanjut, Sulaiman berkata, mengurangkan perbelanjaan membabitkan bayaran tukaran asing seperti menghantar pelajar ke luar negara boleh mengurangkan kesan pergerakan turun naik nilai tukaran asing yang tidak menentu.

Beliau berkata, peluang pendidikan di negara ini juga adalah cerah dengan pelbagai kursus yang berkualiti ditawarkan seperti perubatan, undang-undang dan akauntan.

"Kursus membabitkan ijazah pertama boleh dibuat di sini (Malaysia). Kursus peringkat tinggi seperti Doktor Falsafah boleh meneruskan di luar negeri," katanya ketika ditemui.

HARIAN METRO
Tarikh: 14 MAY 2024

DBKL wajar tanam pokok lasak sesuai cuaca semasa

M Faisal,
Kuala Lumpur

Kejadian pokok tumbang yang menyebabkan kehilangan nyawa seorang pengguna jalan raya di ibu kota baru-baru ini adalah tragedi malang dan menyedihkan.

Susulan kejadian itu, kita melihat kontraktor dilantik Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL) sedang giat menebang pokok besar di lokasi tertentu termasuk di kawasan perumahan awam.

Sebenarnya sejak 2019, sebanyak 175 pokok di ibu kota dikategorikan sebagai berisiko tinggi oleh DBKL dengan 147 daripadanya sudah pun ditebang.

Penebangan pokok yang sebahagiannya berusia 50 tahun ke atas ini tidak dapat dielakkan bagi mengelakkan berulangnya tragedi pohon tumbang hingga menyebabkan ada nyawa terkorban.

Namun, saya berharap supaya DBKL dapat menggantikan semula pokok besar yang terpaksa ditebang itu dengan pokok baharu yang lebih sesuai serta lasak dengan cuaca semasa. Hal ini tentulah disebabkan perubahan cuaca kebelakangan ini agak ekstrem.

Dalam pada itu, pokok yang sudah dipastikan masih kuat dan selamat oleh pakar bertauliah tidak perlu ditebang memadai dengan memotong dahan bagi memastikan keselamatan pengguna jalan raya.

Pokok dan tumbuhan redup masih diperlukan kerana dapat menyejukkan suasana ketika cuaca panas melampau, menjadi penahan hujan, penebat bunyi serta menjadi tempat tinggal kepada hai-

wan kecil seperti tupai. Kehadiran pokok redup dapat mencantikkan pemandangan persekitaran dan mengelakkan Kuala Lumpur menjadi hutan batu semata-mata.

Saya pernah beberapa kali ke Singapura dan mendapati negara berkenaan layak digelar kota dalam taman kerana banyaknya pohon redup di pinggir jalan, malah di sepanjang pembahagi lebuh raya. Persekitaran nyaman ini benar-benar mesra pejalan kaki yang menggunakan pengangkutan awam seperti bas dan tren.

Difahamkan Lembaga Taman Negara (NParks) Singapura turut menebang pohon besar yang berpotensi tumbang, tetapi pada masa sama mereka mempunyai sasaran untuk menanam sehingga 50,000 pokok dalam setahun.

Mungkin kita boleh belajar daripada pengalaman NParks menguruskan pokok berusia antara 50 hingga 100 tahun yang berstatus pokok warisan ini. Namun, pada masa sama kita perlu memastikan pokok ini tidak mendatangkan risiko pula kepada orang awam.



Kejadian pokok tumbang menyebabkan seorang maut dan lebih 10 kenderaan remuk teruk dihempap pokok di Jalan Sultan Ismail pada 7 Mei, lalu.
(Foto Aswadi Alias/BH)

BERITA HARIAN
Tarikh... 14 MAY 2024



Sulaiman (tengah) menyerahkan buku kepada Thillinadan ketika berkunjung ke Balai Berita, Kuala Lumpur, semalam.
(Foto Eizairi Shamsudin/BH)

Tindakan kolektif kurangkan tekanan terhadap ringgit

Langkah bagi imbangi kesan turun naik tidak menentu pasaran tukaran asing

Oleh Mahanum Abdul Aziz
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Kuala Lumpur: Usaha kolektif meningkatkan produktiviti pengeluaran, penggunaan barangan buatan tempatan, melancong dalam negara dan tidak menghantar pelajar ke luar negara untuk kursus ijazah pertama boleh mengurangkan tekanan terhadap ringgit.

Langkah itu boleh mengimbangi kesan turun naik tidak menentu pasaran tukaran asing dan mengurangkan tekanan aliran keluar ringgit.

Syor itu dibuat Ahli Lembaga Pengarah Institut Penyelidikan Ekonomi Malaysia (MIER), Tan Sri Dr Sulaiman Mahbob, sebagai langkah jangka pendek yang secara tidak langsung akan meningkatkan lagi daya saing ekonomi negara di tengah-tengah persekitaran ekonomi global yang mencabar.

Beliau yang juga Pengerusi Lembaga Pembangunan Pelaburan Malaysia (MIDA) berkata, peningkatan dalam produktiviti membolehkan syarikat di negara ini menjana pengeluaran yang lebih tinggi, sekali gus memperluaskan pasaran bagi

barangan tempatan.

Jelasnya, pengeluaran yang tinggi akan merancakkan aktiviti ekonomi dan pada masa sama menyumbang kepada pertumbuhan ekonomi negara.

"Bagi mengatasi kesan kelemahan ringgit, menggalakkan penggunaan barangan dan perkhidmatan tempatan, termasuk melancong dalam negeri juga akan membantu. Rakyat perlu berkorban sedikit demi negara, melancong ke Langkawi, Pangkor berbanding luar negara.

"Sektor industri pula, boleh mengguna bahan tempatan sebagai input bahan mentah termasuk meninjau dalam mata wang yang lebih rendah," katanya mengulas antara usaha yang boleh diambil kerajaan dan rakyat untuk meningkatkan lagi daya saing negara dan menangani kesan kelemahan ringgit berbanding dolar AS.

Beliau berkata demikian kepada media di bawah Kumpulan The New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd (NSTP) sempena kunjungannya ke ibu pejabat NSTP, semalam.

Beliau disambut Timbalan Pengarang Kumpulan Berita Harian (BH), M Thillinadan dan Pengarang Eksekutif (Kandungan) Harian Metro, Muhamad Safar Ahmad.

Pendidikan semakin berkualiti

Mengulas lanjut, Sulaiman berkata, langkah mengurangkan perbelanjaan membabitkan bayaran tukaran wang asing seperti menghantar pelajar ke luar negara boleh mengurangkan kesan pergerakan turun naik nilai ma-

ta wang.

Beliau berkata, peluang pendidikan tinggi di Malaysia kini semakin besar dengan pelbagai kursus berkualiti seperti perubatan, undang-undang dan perakaunan ditawarkan di universiti awam dan swasta.

"Pada pandangan sama, Malaysia sudah sampai ke peringkat di mana nilai dan mutu pendidikan di negara ini adalah tinggi, justeru penghantaran pelajar ke luar negara hanya ditumpukan kepada bidang yang sangat khusus dan kursus yang tidak ditawarkan institusi di negara ini.

"(Hampir semua) Kursus membabitkan ijazah pertama boleh dibuat di sini (Malaysia). Kursus peringkat tinggi seperti Doktor Falsafah boleh diteruskan di luar negeri," katanya.

Ditanya sama ada sesuai dilaksanakan langkah tambatan ringgit pada masa ini bagi menangani kelemahan ringgit berbanding dolar AS, Sulaiman berkata, langkah itu tidak sesuai memandangkan persekitaran ekonomi semasa amat berbeza berbanding ketika krisis kewangan Asia 1997/1998 kerana ketika itu berlaku serangan terhadap ringgit.

Katanya, pergerakan ringgit sekarang banyak dipengaruhi oleh pasaran kewangan global terutama oleh kadar faedah AS yang tinggi serta krisis geopolitik yang memberi kesan kepada rantaian bekalan.

"Apabila kadar faedah AS meningkat, ia memberi kesan kepada kelemahan mata wang dunia lain, termasuk ringgit," katanya.

↑ KUALA LUMPUR
(Indeks Komposit)
(+2.24) mata
1,602.91

↑ SINGAPURA
(Straits Times)
(+10.29) mata
3,300.99

↓ TOKYO
Nikkei
(-49.65) mata
38,179.46

↑ NEW YORK
Dow Jones
(+125.08) mata
39,512.84

INDEKS
MATA WANG
A\$5/RM
4.7425/7330

MINYAK
• WTI
A\$578.54 / RM370.68
• BRENT
A\$583.06 / RM391.69

EMAS 999 (1 GRAM)
RM343.87
SAWIT (TAN METRIK)
RM3,854.50

GETAH (SEN/KG)
SMR CV 1233.50
SMR L 1233.50
SMR S 795.00

GST satu kaedah percukaian terbaik, perlu diperkenalkan semula - Pakar

Oleh ZAKKINA WATI
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PETALING JAYA: Cukai Barang dan Perkhidmatan (GST) dilihat salah satu kaedah percukaian terbaik dan perlu diperkenalkan semula kerana ia merupakan satu cukai yang komprehensif.

Pensyarah Kanan, Fakulti Ekonomi dan Muamalat, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Dr. Mohd. Faisal Ibrahim berpendapat, bagaimanapun, kadar cukai yang ingin diperkenalkan perlu mengambil kira sentimen kepada pasaran ekonomi Malaysia terhadap pengenalan GST ini.

"Saya berpandangan supaya kadar GST yang ingin diperkenalkan tidak terlalu tinggi seperti tahun sebelum ini.

"Hal ini kerana, supaya pengeluaran, syarikat dan penjual dapat melaksanakan GST ini secara efektif dan terancang serta tidak memberi kesan kenaikan yang besar kepada harga penawaran barangan dan perkhidmatan dalam negara," katanya ketika dihubungi *Utusan Malaysia*.

Menurut Mohd. Faisal, sekiranya GST dapat dilaksanakan semula maka, pembeli dapat melalui proses ini secara biasa tanpa perlu kepada situasi panik dan tekanan kewangan oleh isi rumah.

"GST yang diperkenalkan oleh Malaysia sebelum ini pada kadar enam peratus adalah agak tinggi kerana kemungkinan pengeluaran, syarikat dan penjual masih belum bersedia sepenuhnya dengan pengenalan cukai ini.

"Oleh itu, kadar GST ini perlu diperkenalkan dengan kadar yang rendah iaitu mungkin sekitar tiga peratus dahulu sebelum ia dinaikkan secara berperingkat dalam



PAKAR berpendapat Cukai Barang dan Perkhidmatan (GST) wajar diperkenalkan semula namun perlu mengambil kira kadar yang lebih rendah berbanding enam peratus sebelum ini. - GAMBAR HIASAN

suatu tempoh tertentu setelah pelaksanaan cukai ini telah mula berjalan dengan sempurna di kalangan pengeluaran, syarikat dan penjual serta pengguna," katanya.

Sementara itu, Ketua ekonomi dan Kewangan Sosial Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd., Dr. Mohd. Afzanizam Abdul Rashid berkata, pelaksanaan semula cukai itu perlu dibincang dengan lebih teliti dan mengambil kira pandangan semua pihak.

"Sesi libat urus yang kompre-

hensif seharusnya dapat membantu dalam mendapatkan pandangan yang seimbang terutama di kalangan para peniaga dan pakar percukaian," katanya.

Kelmarin, Dewan Perniagaan dan Perindustrian Kebangsaan Malaysia (NCCIM) menyarankan supaya GST diperkenalkan semula sebagai langkah terbaik untuk meningkatkan hasil kerajaan.

Presiden NCCIM, Tan Sri Soh Thian Lai berkata, GST bersifat menyeluruh untuk semua pihak

berbanding pengenalan pelbagai cukai baharu ketika ini yang hanya tertumpu kepada beberapa golongan.

Beliau berkata, NCCIM yang juga gabungan lima dewan perniagaan iaitu Dewan Perniagaan Melayu Malaysia (DPMM), Gabungan Dewan Perniagaan Dan Perindustrian Cina Malaysia (ACCIM), Gabungan Dewan Perniagaan dan Perindustrian India Malaysia (MAICCI), Persekutuan Pekilang-Pekilang Malaysia (FMM)

dan Dewan Perniagaan dan Industri Antarabangsa Malaysia (MICCI) turut bersetuju GST 2.0 perlu diperkenalkan pada kadar empat peratus.

Katanya, langkah kerajaan memperkenalkan pelbagai cukai baharu bagi menampung pendapatan kerajaan yang pada akhirnya memberikan tekanan kepada perniagaan, justeru wajar mempunyai pandangan politik yang jelas dengan memperkenalkan semula GST.

UTUSAN MALAYSIA
Tarikh: 14 MAY 2014

Buat belanja kahwin, sekolah antara alasan pencarum KWSP

AM
14/6

Oleh FADZIL ZAINOL
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IPOH: Perbelanjaan persiapan perkahwinan merupakan antara alasan pencarum yang memenuhi pekarangan pejabat Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja (KWSP) di Jalan Greentown di sini bagi memindahkan simpanan dari Akaun Sejahtera ke Akaun Fleksibel.

Para pencarum memenuhi premis itu seawal pukul 7 pagi untuk menantikan pejabat dibuka pada pukul 8.30 pagi.

Pencarum mahu memindahkan simpanan dari Akaun Sejahtera ke Akaun Fleksibel berikutan penstrukturan akaun KWSP dengan semua akaun ahli di bawah umur 55 tahun kepada tiga akaun iaitu Akaun Persaraan, Akaun Sejahtera dan Akaun Fleksibel.

"Saya mengetahui perkara ini dalam berita. Saya mahu pakai duit untuk belanja perkahwinan saya pada 1 Jun ini," kata seorang pencarum yang mahu dikenali sebagai Ida, 22, bekerja sebagai pembantu rangkaian minuman mewah ternama.

Seorang lagi pencarum, Hamdan, 48, memberitahu, dia hadir ke pejabat KWSP kerana tidak memahami proses untuk mengeluarkan duit tersebut dan baginya maklumat yang diterangkan dalam internet dan media sosial agak mengelirukan.

"Saya datang dari Kampung Gajah sejak pukul 7 pagi. Hampir dua jam saya tunggu. Rakyat perlukan duit kerana bulan lepas duit habis digunakan untuk belanja persekolahan dan persiapan hari raya," katanya.

Bagi mengawal keadaan yang sesak, pejabat KWSP Cawangan



ORANG ramai menunggu giliran bagi urusan pemindahan caruman daripada Akaun Sejahtera ke Akaun Fleksibel di pekarangan pejabat KWSP di Jalan Greentown, Ipoh, Perak, semalam.

Ipoh menyediakan kerusi menunggu di hadapan pintu masuk dan setiap pencarum dipanggil mengikut giliran.

Kesemua pencarum yang duduk menunggu di kerusi yang disediakan adalah mereka yang mahu menguruskan Akaun Fleksibel masing-masing, manakala untuk urusan lain dibenarkan terus masuk ke dalam pejabat.

Suasana dilihat tenang walaupun ada yang melahirkan rasa tidak puas hati kerana terdapat pencarum lain memotong barisan.

"Saya hadir, mereka imbas kad pengenalan. Kemudian kakitangan ajar bagaimana mahu menggunakan aplikasi i-Akaun. Urusan saya selesai dalam masa 10 minit. Saya mahu gunakan duit ini untuk bayar macam-macam," kata

Ajak, 39.

Ada pencarum pulang setelah melihat kesesakan dan tempoh menunggu yang lama.

KWSP mengumumkan inisiatif penstrukturan akaun KWSP dengan semua akaun ahli di bawah umur 55 tahun distruktur semula kepada tiga akaun iaitu Akaun Persaraan, Akaun Sejahtera dan Akaun Fleksibel.

Menerusi penstrukturan itu, pencarum boleh mengeluarkan duit menerusi Akaun Fleksibel berdasarkan baki yang ada dalam Akaun Sejahtera.

Misalnya, jika simpanan dalam Akaun Sejahtera melebihi RM1,000 tetapi kurang RM3,000, duit yang boleh dipindahkan ke Akaun Fleksibel ialah RM1,000 sahaja.

UTUSAN MALAYSIA

Tarikh: 11.4 MAY 2024...

NO CASUALTIES, INJURIES REPORTED

TREES UPROOTED IN KL STORM

5 cars, 5 motorcycles damaged in city centre, Kuchai Lama, Universiti Malaya

FUAD NIZAM
AND NOR AZIZAH MOKHTAR
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SEVERAL vehicles, including one escorting Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Ab Rauf Yusoh's convoy, were damaged when heavy rain and strong winds uprooted several trees around the city about 3.30pm yesterday.

City Fire and Rescue Department Operations Centre said five cars and five motorcycles were damaged in the city centre, Kuchai Lama and Universiti Malaya. There were no casualties or injuries reported.

The incident came a week after a fallen tree in Jalan Sultan Ismail here caused the death of one man, damaged 17 vehicles and damaged part of the Kuala Lumpur monorail track, disrupting services for a day.

"A tree also fell on Jalan Rahmah in Taman Gembira, Kuchai Lama, and obstructed traffic flow.

The department said: "Another tree fell onto the roof of a house in Jalan Selesa 1 of the same neigh-

bourhood. No injuries were reported in both incidents."

It added that a tree fell at Universiti Malaya's Faculty of Medicine, causing damage to a nearby parked car.

"A tree also fell at the university's examination building and damaged a parked car.

"In Jalan Pinang and Jalan P. Ramlee, an uprooted tree crushed eight vehicles, including cars and motorcycles. There were no injuries," it said.

Kuala Lumpur police chief Datuk Rusdi Mohd Isa confirmed that a tree which fell in Jalan Pinang damaged a police vehicle in the Melaka chief minister's convoy.

It was learnt the police vehicle, a Proton X70, was escorting three vehicles, one of which was carrying Rauf to an event in the city centre. The occupants of the vehicles, including Rauf, are reportedly safe.

The Fire and Rescue Department is collaborating with Kuala Lumpur City Hall to conduct tree-cutting and cleaning operations in the affected areas.

Meanwhile, Perak Fire and Rescue Department assistant director of operations Sabarodzi Nor Ahmad said heavy rain in two areas since Sunday night had led to surge in water levels in rivers and in an upstream area.

He said the heavy downpour caused a water surge at the Lata Iskandar waterfall in Tapah at 9am yesterday, but no one was injured. "There was also heavy downpour in Kampar since last night



Kuala Lumpur City Hall workers inspecting the vehicles damaged by a fallen tree in Jalan Pinang yesterday. PIX BY MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI

(Sunday). This resulted in the dangerous water level in Sungai Kampar this morning (yesterday). However, there was no flood or evacuation of victims," he said. **Additional reporting by T.N Alagesh**

Page 1 pix: Cars and properties damaged in a storm in Jalan Pinang (main pic), Taman Gembira (top) and at the Universiti Malaya medical faculty in Kuala Lumpur.



A vehicle damaged by the fallen tree in Jalan Pinang yesterday.



A police vehicle that was escorting Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Ab Rauf Yusoh is damaged by the uprooted tree in Jalan Pinang. PICTURE COURTESY OF POLICE



Kuala Lumpur City Hall workers removing the tree from Jalan Pinang.

AI set to revolutionise healthcare

ARTIFICIAL intelligence (AI) will lead to vast changes in healthcare, including enhanced diagnostics, personalised medicine, drug discovery, treatment development and more efficient administration.

It's no secret that AI can perform tasks faster, more efficiently and at a lower cost.

It was recently reported that hospitals in Singapore may soon be using AI to assess patients in emergency departments to determine which patients need treatment first.

But what about Malaysia? Health Ministry's senior principal assistant director Dr Mohamad Fadli Khariie says he's optimistic about the use of AI and its potential in healthcare.

At the moment, AI in Malaysian healthcare is in its early stages, he says, but with continued investment and focus on overcoming challenges, it's poised for significant growth in the coming years.

While some Malaysian hospitals are utilising AI for tasks like analysing medical images or streamlining administrative processes, it's not yet widespread.

"The government recognises AI's potential and is taking steps to promote its adoption. Grants and resources have been allocated to encourage adoption of AI in healthcare."

However, several factors hinder wider adoption. These include concerns over data privacy, the cost of implementing AI solutions, and the need for robust infrastructure to support AI applications.

FASTER DIAGNOSIS

Dr Fadli says AI algorithms can analyse patterns in medical scans such as CT scans, X-rays and MRIs with far greater speed and accuracy, potentially lead-



Dr Mohamad Fadli Khariie says at the moment, AI in Malaysian healthcare is in its early stages, but with continued investment and focus on overcoming challenges, it's poised for significant growth in the coming years.

ing to earlier and more precise diagnoses. This translates to quicker treatment, improved patient outcomes and even saves lives. AI can also analyse a patient's unique medical history, genetic make-up and lifestyle to predict their risk for certain diseases.

This allows for the creation of personalised treatment plans, where care is tailored to the individual.

This shift towards personalised medicine holds immense promise for preventative care and more effective treatment

strategies, explains Dr Fadli.

AI-powered chatbots or virtual assistants can also offer initial mental health assessments and provide basic support, particularly in areas with limited access to mental health professionals, he adds.

AI can also accelerate the process of drug discovery by analysing vast datasets of molecular structures, genomic data and identifying potential drug candidates.

SPEEDING UP TASKS

Administrative efficiency is one of the key benefits of AI.

"Through generative AI, chatbots can handle routine tasks like scheduling appointments and answering basic patient questions, freeing up healthcare professionals to focus on complex cases. This can improve clinic efficiency and patient satisfaction," says Dr Fadli.

But perhaps the most transformative aspect of AI in healthcare is data analytics. AI excels at analysing enormous volumes of health datasets from electronic health records, medical research and wearable devices.

By identifying patterns and trends in this data, AI can predict disease spread, health hazards and optimise resource allocation.

meera@nst.com.my

SMART HEALTHCARE

Tech development for your healthcare

NST
14/5

While digital technology is widely used in healthcare, there is always a place for the human touch. PICTURE CREDIT: RAWPIXEL.COM — FREEPIK

AI - LIMITATIONS

DATA PRIVACY

Artificial intelligence (AI) relies heavily on patient data, and ensuring its security and privacy is paramount. A strong data governance framework which extensively covers health ethics is needed to build trust and encourage patient participation.

ALGORITHMIC BIAS

AI algorithms can perpetuate existing biases in healthcare data, potentially leading to discriminatory practices. Careful development and validation of AI tools, taking into consideration Malaysia's population and ethnicities, are crucial to mitigate this risk.

HUMAN EXPERTISE

AI should be seen as a tool to augment, not replace, human expertise. The final decisions regarding patient care should always rest with qualified healthcare professionals.

USING TECHNOLOGY TO MANAGE PANDEMICS

GEOGRAPHIC information system (GIS) technology aids disease and outbreak control by revealing disease distribution patterns and facilitating outbreak management.

It's a system designed to create, manage, analyse and map all types of data. It connects data to a map, integrating location data (where things are) with all types of descriptive information (what things are like there).

Health Ministry senior principal assistant director Dr Mohamad Fadli Khariie says during Covid-19, GIS technology was used to visualise the spread of the outbreak, localise hotspots, and determine the spread and patterns of the outbreak.

This facilitated stakeholders in planning public health interventions, allocating resources and making informed decisions.

GIS will be an important tool in preparation for any upcoming pandemic, to enhance health risk identification, disease surveillance, interagency coordination and targeting interventions, he adds.

"GIS goes beyond just case mapping. We can identify the health risk surrounding the population. This pinpoints areas most susceptible to severe outbreaks and health crises, allowing for proactive measures like disaster planning, prevention and resource planning."

And since GIS excels at overlaying case data on maps, it can track disease occurrence and outbreak spread patterns.

This allows for early detection and rapid response — containing outbreaks before they escalate.

Artificial intelligence (AI) could revolutionise the way healthcare is managed and delivered. PICTURE CREDIT: IMAGE BY MACROVECTOR — FREEPIK

