

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 6
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Gula-gula Apple S mengandungi racun berjadual

KKM sahkan kandungan tak berdaftar sebagai penyekat selera makan

Oleh Mohd Iskandar Ibrahim
bhnews@bh.com.my

Putrajaya: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mengesahkan produk gula-gula jenama Apple S mengandungi racun berjadual yang tidak berdaftar dengan kementerian.

KKM dalam satu kenyataan memaklumkan, pihaknya menerusi Program Keselamatan dan Kualiti Makanan (PKKM)

mendapati produk terbabit mengandungi sibutramine, iaitu sejenis ubat yang digunakan untuk mengawal selera makan.

Katanya, sibutramine adalah sebatian kimia yang bertindak di otak sebagai penyekat rasa lapar atau selera makan yang digunakan di dalam kebanyakan produk bagi tujuan menguruskan badan dan ubat terbabit tersenarai dalam bahan terlarang yang tidak lagi berdaftar dengan KKM.

"Antara kesan sampingan sibutramine yang dilaporkan adalah gangguan fungsi sistem jantung seperti menyebabkan degupan jantung menjadi lebih laju (tachycardia) walaupun dalam keadaan rehat.

"Selain kesan sampingan yang serius, terdapat juga kesan sampingan yang ringan seperti mulut kering, rasa mual, sembe-

lit, sukar tidur, pening, senggugut dan sebagainya," katanya.

Tak patuh pelabelan

KKM berkata, produk terbabit didapati tidak mematuhi keperluan pelabelan di bawah Peraturan-Peraturan Makanan 1985, antaranya tiada nama sebenar produk dalam Bahasa Malaysia serta tiada maklumat mengenai pengilang, pembungkus, pengedar, atau pemilik hak pengilangan dan pengimport.

Justeru, produk berkenaan tidak dibenarkan untuk diiklankan atau dijual mengikut Peraturan 9 Peraturan-Peraturan Makanan 1985.

"Semua peniaga termasuk peniaga dalam talian yang masih mempunyai stok produk terbabit diarah untuk menghentikan serta-merta penjualan dan menghubungi Pejabat Kesihatan



PKKM mendapati produk gula-gula jenama Apple S mengandungi sibutramine.

(Foto ihsan KKM)

Daerah terdekat untuk tujuan penyitaan.

"Di samping itu, semua media pengiklanan termasuk platform e-dagang dan media sosial hendaklah menghentikan penyiaran iklan makanan ber-

kenaan," katanya.

Orang ramai yang sedang menggunakan produk itu perlu menghentikan penggunaannya serta-merta dan mendapatkan nasihat serta rawatan daripada ahli profesional kesihatan.

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Pembatalan lesen memandu OKU mental perlu dinilai berdasar kes

Tindakan secara melulu tidak wajar, ramai perlu kenderaan sendiri untuk urusan mencari rezeki

Oleh Muhammad Zulsyamini
Sufian Suri
bhnews@bh.com.my

Ipoh: Jabatan Pengangkutan Jalan (JPJ) tidak bercadang membatalkan lesen memandu bagi individu disahkan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) sebagai orang kurang upaya (OKU) mental kerana ia perlu dinilai mengikut kes, bukannya secara melulu atau berdasarkan stereotaip.

Menteri Pengangkutan, Anthony Loke, berkata tindakan membatalkan lesen memandu OKU mental sangat tidak wajar berikutan masih ramai dalam kalangan mereka mampu memandu dengan baik dan memerlukan pengangkutan sendiri termasuk dalam urusan mencari rezeki.

"Kita akan lihat berdasarkan kes spesifik dan tidak boleh (dinilai) secara umum (stereotaip) terhadap golongan OKU mental. Mereka juga perlukan lesen un-



Loke (dua dari kanan) dan Saarani Mohamad (dua dari kiri) menyaksikan Majlis Menandatangani Perjanjian Persefahaman (MoA) Cadangan Pembangunan Ipoh Sentral antara Ipoh Sentral Sdn Bhd (ISSB) dan Country Annexe Sdn Bhd (CASB) di Ipoh, semalam. (Foto BERNAMA)

tuk berulang-alik dan ada yang mampu memandu dengan baik.

"Jadi, kalau ada kes terpencil dan spesifik, kita akan lihat sama ada akan tarik balik lesen mereka atau sebaliknya. Ini bukan dasar, sebab masih ramai OKU membawa kenderaan dengan selamat, malah ada yang jadi pemandu e-hailing yang kita lesenkan.

"Saya tak mahu keluar kan kenyataan secara umum yang boleh memangsakan yang lain. Kalau ada kes tertentu kita lihat dan ambil tindakan sewajarnya," katanya selepas Majlis Menandatangani Perjanjian Persefahaman (MoA) Cadangan Pemba-

ngunan Ipoh Sentral antara Ipoh Sentral Sdn Bhd (ISSB) dan Country Annexe Sdn Bhd (CASB) di sini, semalam.

Anthony bersama Menteri Besar, Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad menyaksikan pemeteraian MoA itu yang ditandatangani Pengarah Urusan Kumpulan MR-CB, Datuk Imran Salim mewakili CASB, manakala ISSB diwakili Ketua Pegawai Eksekutifnya, Firdaus Effendy Mokhtar.

PPJK gesa batal lesen

Beliau ditanya reaksi kenyataan Presiden Persatuan Pengguna Jalan Raya Kebangsaan (PPJK), Fahami Ashrof Badaruddin kelma-

rin yang dilapor menggesa JPJ membatalkan lesen memandu individu disahkan OKU mental dengan alasan jika membenarkan seseorang tanpa kewarasan akal memandu, ia boleh membahayakan orang lain.

Fahami Ashrof mengeluarkan gesaan itu susulan laporan media pada Jumaat lalu mengenai seorang lelaki OKU mental berusia 47 tahun dipukul beberapa individu di Pasar Tani Padang Astaka Chukai, Terengganu selepas motosikal ditunggangnya terlanggar sebuah gerai jualan menyebabkan makanan dijual tumpah.

Pada 9 Oktober tahun lalu pu-

la, tiga penuntut Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Kampus Dungun maut dilanggar pemandu didakwa pesakit mental, namun Pejabat Kesihatan Terengganu yang membuat semakan mendapati suspek berusia 49 tahun tidak mempunyai sebarang rekod kesihatan sama ada di hospital atau klinik kesihatan.

Rentetan dua peristiwa itu Fahami Asrof dilapor berkata, PPJK mahu menghantar surat kepada Jabatan Pengangkutan Jalan (JPJ) atau Kementerian Pengangkutan (MoT) untuk memastikan sekolah memandu peka dengan pelajar yang datang sebagai OKU mental.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 27
RUANGAN : KWANITA

Kesihatan

Chef DR. HEMA DARSHINEE JOHNSON

KANSER hati merupakan salah satu masalah yang sering berlaku dalam kalangan masyarakat di negara ini.

Berdasarkan Laporan Daftar Kanser Kebangsaan Malaysia 2017-2021, kanser hati kini menduduki tempat kelima dalam senarai kanser paling kerap berlaku di negara ini.

Masalah ini mencatatkan peningkatan dari tempat kelapan berbanding laporan sebelumnya (2012-2016).

Statistik tersebut juga menunjukkan jumlah kes kanser hati dalam kalangan lelaki adalah lebih tinggi berbanding wanita.

Peningkatan kes ini perlu diinspektikan oleh masyarakat, terutama sekali bagi mereka yang mempunyai faktor risiko.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr. Dzulkefly Ahmad berkata, kadar kematian kanser hati melorak secara global yang didorong oleh sarak obesiti dan diabetes.

Hal ini menunjukkan betapa pentingnya untuk masyarakat lebih peka tentang perkara-perkara yang dapat meningkatkan risiko kanser hati dan gejala-gejalanya.

Hati merupakan organ dalaman terbesar dalam tubuh manusia yang memegang peranan sangat penting dalam memastikan kelancaran fungsi tubuh.

Salah satu tugas utama hati adalah detoxifikasi, di mana ia menapis darah daripada toksin, ubat-ubatan dan bahan kimia di dalam tubuh.

Selain itu, hati berfungsi sebagai tempat penyimpanan tenaga dengan menyimpan glukosa dalam bentuk glikogen dan memastikan tubuh mempunyai sumber tenaga mencukupi apabila diperlukan.

Peranan organ ini juga melibatkan pengaliran protein lemak, albumin dan faktor pembekuan darah yang penting dalam proses penyembuhan apabila kita mengalami kecederaan.

Disamping itu, hati turut menghasilkan hempedu untuk menyekam lemak yang penting dalam membantu pencernaan lemak.

Perduluan hati dalam metabolisme lemak, protein dan karbohidrat membantu mengawal keseimbangan hormon dalam tubuh, sekali gus menjadikannya organ yang begitu vital dalam mengekalkan kesihatan.

Terdapat organ yang berfungsi dengan baik, tubuh kita akan menghadapi pelbagai cabaran.

Kanser hati sering kali berpunca daripada kerosakan hati. Terdapat beberapa faktor risiko yang boleh meningkatkan kemungkinan seseorang menghadapi.


Salah satu penyebab utama adalah jangkitan hepatitis yang berlaku dalam tempoh lama (kronik) terutamanya oleh virus Hepatitis B (HBV) dan Hepatitis C (HCV).

Syakit hati berakutali: pengumpulan lemak pada organ hati juga boleh meningkatkan risiko kanser. Masalah ini sering dikaitkan dengan obesiti atau diabetes.

Selain itu, individu yang mengalami masalah pankreas hati atau pankreas kerosakan ini selalunya berlaku akibat daripada jangkitan, pengambilan alkohol berlebihan atau penyakit autoimun.

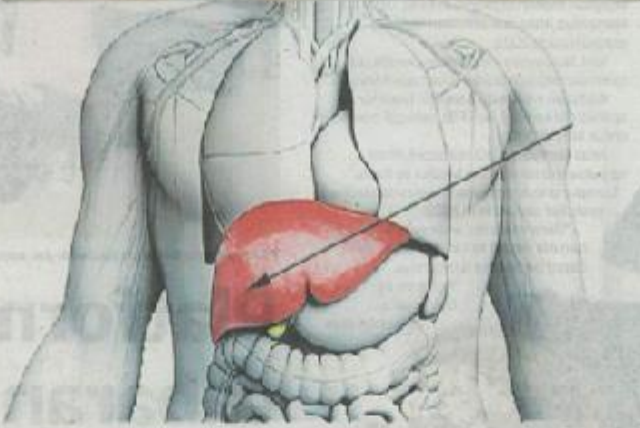
Ancaman kanser hati kian meningkat di Malaysia

Kawasan Kwanita, 27



PENGAMILAN alkohol secara berlebihan boleh merosakkan hati.

- GALEER HANAN



KANSER hati menduduki tempat kelima dalam senarai kanser paling kerap dialami di Malaysia.

Pengambilan alkohol secara berlebihan memainkan peranan besar dalam merosakkan hati. Malah, orang ramai harus berwaspada dengan kadar pengambilan alkohol mereka.

Di samping itu, makanan tercemar seperti kacang tanah yang mengandungi racun dikaitkan sebagai aflatoxin (dihasilkan oleh kulat) boleh menjadi punca kanser hati.

Faktor genetik turut memainkan peranan bagi mereka yang mempunyai sejarah keluarga menghadapi kanser hati.

Penggunaan steroid anabolik dalam jangka masa panjang (untuk meningkatkan bina badan) turut meningkatkan risiko kerana bahan tersebut dapat menyebabkan kerosakan hati.

Dengan mengetahui punca dan faktor risiko ini, kita akan lebih berhati-hati dalam menjaga kesihatan hati dan mencegah penyakit berkaitan ini.

Faktor peringkat awal, kanser hati selalunya tidak menunjukkan gejala jelas.

Namun, beberapa tanda amaran yang mungkin muncul termasuk kelesuan dan berasa kurang tenaga, kehilangan berat

badan tanpa sebab yang jelas dan hilang selera makan berpanjangan.

Selain itu, tanda amaran lain termasuk rasa kenyang walaupun makan sedikit, sakit atau rasa tidak selesa di bahagian kanan atas perut, kulit dan mata menjadi kuning atau jaundis serta abdomen bengkak.

Jika seseorang mengalami gejala-gejala tersebut, ia sangat penting untuk segera mendapatkan pemeriksaan perubatan.

Kanser hati boleh didiagnoskan melalui beberapa kaedah:

Pertama, ujian darah dilakukan untuk mengukur tanda-tanda seperti paras enzim hati tinggi atau penanda tumor, salah satunya alpha fetoprotein (AFP) yang boleh menunjukkan kehadiran kanser.

Selain itu, imbasan seperti ultrabunyi, CT scan atau pengimejan resonans magnetik (MRI) juga digalakan untuk melihat dengan jelas tentang tumor yang mungkin ada pada hati.

Jika hasil imbasan mencurigakan, biopsi hati akan dilakukan, di mana sedikit sampel tisu diambil untuk disahkan di makmal.

Selain itu, endoskopi membantu untuk menilai tahap kerosakan atau punat pada

hati (sirosis).

Selain itu, emobisasi juga boleh dilakukan iaitu dengan menyekat bekalan darah ke tumor untuk menghalangya daripada berkembang.

Walaupun kemoterapi jarang digunakan dalam kes kanser hati, ia masih boleh memberi manfaat dalam beberapa keadaan, terutamanya apabila kanser telah merebak.

Prognosis atau peluang pemulihan pesakit bergantung kepada peringkat kanser ketika ia dikesan.

Jika kanser hati dikesan pada peringkat awal, peluang untuk sembuh adalah tinggi.

Namun, bagi kanser yang telah mencapai peringkat lanjut, rawatan yang lebih kompleks diperlukan untuk mengurangkan simptom.

Pencegahan kanser hati bermula dengan langkah-langkah mudah yang boleh diamalkan dalam kehidupan seharian.

Selain itu, orang ramai perlu menghidang jangkitan Hepatitis C dengan memastikan gaya hidup sihat seperti memukulkan peredaran jarum suntik untuk menghindari penularan virus.

Mengurangkan pengambilan alkohol juga sangat penting. Ini kerana, alkohol yang berlebihan boleh merosakkan hati dan meningkatkan risiko kanser.

Berat badan: memamalkan ubat-ubatan dalam usaha pencegahan ini, ia perlu dikawal untuk mengelakkan obesiti yang dapat menyumbang kepada penyakit hati berlemak.

Di samping itu, amalan pemakanan bersih seperti mengelakkan makanan tercemar dengan aflatoxin dapat membantu menjaga kesihatan hati.

Akhir sekali, bagi individu yang berisiko tinggi seperti mereka yanghidap hepatitis atau sirosis, pemeriksaan kesihatan secara berkala sangat disarankan untuk mengesan sebarang masalah pada peringkat awal.

Dengan mengamalkan langkah-langkah pencegahan ini, kita boleh menjaga hati dengan lebih baik.

Kesihatan hati, kanser hati merupakan ancaman kesihatan yang semakin meningkat di Malaysia, terutamanya dalam kalangan individu yang mempunyai faktor risiko.

Kita boleh menjaga kesihatan hati melalui gaya hidup sihat, pemakanan bersih dan pemeriksaan kesihatan secara berkala, sekali gus mengurangkan risiko menghadapi kanser hati.

DR. HEMA DARSHINEE JOHNSON
Rendaman Pogueya Perubatan Onkologi
Mediterapi di Columbia Asia Hospital Bukit
Riau, Shah Alam, Selangor

AKHBAR : KOSMO
 MUKA SURAT : 18
 RUANGAN : NEGARA

Budak lincah terperuk akibat kanser

- Jadi lemah selepas hidap barah
- Ibu harap dapat bantuan beli susu

Oleh MOHD. RAFIE AZIMI

JITRA – Seorang kanak-kanak yang suatu ketika lincah di sekolah kini hanya mampu duduk di depan pintu rumah menunggu rakan-rakannya datang bersembang selepas disahkan menghidap kanser *limfoma burkitt* sejak September lalu.

T. Shaanjiv, 10, terpaksa melupakan sukan bola sepak dan bola keranjang yang diminatinya selepas diserang penyakit itu secara tiba-tiba yang membuatnya cepat letih dan tidak bermaya.

Ibunya, G. Kavitha, 39, berkata, anaknya sebelum ini seorang yang aktif bersukan hinggalah dia selalu memarahi Shaanjiv kerana bermain bola sepak di dalam rumah.

“Dia dan adik beradiknya yang lain kumpul banyak piala dan medal sehinggalah pada suatu hari dia tiba-tiba mengadu sakit perut sampai menangis sebelum kami bergegas membawanya ke hospital.

“Selepas menjalani ujian biopsi, pihak hospital mengesahkan anak saya menghidap



KAVITHA (kiri) memerhatikan Zuraini (dua dari kiri) menyantuni anaknya, Shaanjiv ketika menziarahi kanak-kanak itu di rumahnya di Pekan Tunjang, Jitra baru-baru ini.

kanser. Kini kami sering membawanya untuk menjalani rawatan kemoterapi di Hospital Pulau Pinang,” katanya.

Terdahulu, dua beranak itu menerima kunjungan Pengerusi Cancer Survivors Malaysia, Zuraini Kamal di rumah mereka di Jalan belakang Sekolah Ke-

bangsaan Cina Hwa Min, Pekan Tunjang di sini baru-baru ini.

Menurut Kavitha, selepas menjalani tiga pusingan kemoterapi, anaknya dilihat semakin sihat dan amat berharap dapat kembali ke sekolah pada sesi akan datang.

Tambahnya, kanser memberi

kesan besar kepada anaknya apabila hanya mampu terperuk di rumah dan tidak lagi ke sekolah walaupun terletak bersebelahan rumahnya.

“Kadangkala dia duduk di muka pintu, manakala rakan-rakannya pula datang menghampirinya pagar sekolah untuk bersem-



Hubungi:
 019 3330 896
 03 7455 6448

bang. Melihat keadaan itu, saya memang sedih kerana dia dulu memang sangat aktif hingga terpilih mewakili pasukan bola keranjang sekolah,” katanya.

Ujar Kavitha, anaknya kini hanya minum susu khas berharga RM90 untuk satu tin 800 gram.

“Suami, J. Tanabalasingan hanya bekerja sebagai pemandu lori dengan gaji RM1,500 sebulan, manakala saya hanyalah suri rumah. Kami kena berjimat kerana memiliki lima anak lain selain perlu menyediakan untuk membawa Shaanjiv mendapatkan rawatan di Hospital Pulau Pinang kerana jaraknya yang jauh,” katanya.

Mana-mana pihak yang mahu membantu boleh menyalurkan ke akaun Public Bank bernombor **6451298201** milik Kavitha atau menghubunginya di talian **011-3617 7156**.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 3

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Persatuan industri vape bimbang aktiviti penyeludupan

SHAH ALAM- Kelemahan penguatkuasaan dan proses kelulusan produk vape yang ketat oleh Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) dijangka memberi kesan negatif terhadap industri vape termasuk risiko peningkatan aktiviti penyeludupan dan pasaran gelap.

Presiden Persatuan Peruncit Peranti dan Cecair Rokok Elektronik (MRECA), Datuk Adzwan Ab Manas berkata, proses yang rumit dan mengambil masa lama untuk urusan pendaftaran produk di KKM juga boleh menyebabkan ketiadaan produk sah untuk dijual selepas 1 April 2025.

"Situasi ini berpotensi merugikan industri vape dan menggalakkan perdagangan haram. Jadi undang-undang sedia ada perlu disertai dengan penguatkuasaan yang lebih efektif dan pantas untuk memastikan pengawalseliaan produk vape berjalan lancar," katanya.

Sementara itu, Setiausaha Agung Dewan Perniagaan Vape Malaysia (DPVM), Ridhwan Rosli berkata, semanganya aktiviti penyeludupan selama ini memberi impak negatif kepada industri vape tempatan dan berharap lebih banyak usaha penguatkuasaan dilakukan.

"Sekiranya tidak dilaksanakan, kurang adil bagi pemain industri vape tempatan yang mengikut peraturan KKM dari segi spesifikasi seperti membayar cukai untuk bersaing dengan produk seludup.

"Saya ucapkan tahniah, syabas dan terima kasih kepada SPRM," katanya.



ADZWAN **RIDHWAN**

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

JPJ tak boleh batal lesen OKU mental



Anthony Loke (dua dari kanan) menyaksikan Majlis Menandatangani Memorandum Perjanjian Pembangunan Ipoh Sentral antara Ipoh Sentral Sdn Bhd pada Khamis.

Tindakan tidak boleh dilakukan sewenang-wenangnya kerana ia hanya kes terpencil

Oleh SAIFULLAH AHMAD
IPOH

Jabatan Pengangkutan Jalan (JPJ) tidak boleh sewenang-wenangnya membatalkan lesen memandu individu orang kurang upaya (OKU) mental.

Menteri Pengangkutan, Anthony Loke Siew Fook berkata, bukan semua OKU tidak mampu memandu dengan baik dan jika berlaku ia hanya kes terpencil.

Menurutnya, OKU juga memerlukan lesen untuk bekerja atau melakukan urusan seharian.

"Kalau ada kes-kes terpencil, kes-kes spesifik kita akan lihatlah sama ada nak tarik balik lesen mereka. Jangan generalisasi sebab ramai OKU yang mampu membawa kenderaan dengan selamat malah kita ada pemandu e-hailing pun daripada golongan OKU yang mungkin bisu, pekak dan sebagainya.

"Mereka adalah pemandu-pemandu yang baik jadi saya tak nak nanti satu kenyataan secara umum mangsakan yang lain," katanya selepas menyaksikan Majlis Menandatangani Memorandum Perjanjian Pembangunan Ipoh Sentral di sebuah hotel di sini pada Khamis.

Pada 22 Januari, media melaporkan sebuah pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO) mencadangkan agar JPJ membatalkan lesen memandu individu yang disahkan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) sebagai OKU mental.

Presiden Persatuan Pengguna Jalan Raya Kebangsaan (PPJK), Fahami Ashrof Badaruddin berkata, membenarkan seseorang tanpa kewarasan akal boleh meletakkan bahaya kepada orang lain.

Jumaat lalu, media melaporkan seorang lelaki OKU mental berusia 47 tahun dipukul beberapa individu di Pasar Tani Padang Astaka Chukai selepas motosikal ditunggangnya terlanggar sebuah gerai jualan menyebabkan makanan tumpah.

Susulan itu, beberapa individu yang berada di lokasi tersebut telah bertindak memukul mangsa.

Polis kemudiannya menahan reman suspek terlibat untuk siasatan lanjut mengikut Seksyen 147 Kanun Keseksaan.

>> LAGI BERITA DI MUKA 27

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : THE NATION

Nancy urges empathy as not all disabilities are visible

By GERARD CIMINO
gerard.cimino@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: The public is reminded to treat everyone with empathy and fairness as not all disabilities are visible, says Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri (pic).

The Women, Family and Community Development Minister emphasised the importance of showing kindness and having sympathy for others.

Nancy spoke on the need to be cautious when interacting with others as it was difficult to identify if someone is disabled or

not just based on looks.

"For example, you may not know if someone is autistic or not," she said when met after launching the Social Services e-Learning System and Social Inclusion of Malaysia's official portal here yesterday.

Her views follow an incident involving a trader with disabilities Ahmad Noh Al Faizan Jusoh, 47, who was assaulted by a group of men after crashing his motorcycle into a stall at Pasar Tani Taman Astaka in Chukai, Terengganu, ear-



lier this month.

He was admitted to Hospital Kemaman after sustaining injuries to his body and face.

The police have since arrested three men aged between 18 and 50 to assist in investigations.

Nancy described the incident as "very inhumane" and strongly voiced out against those taking the law into their own hands.

"It should not have happened, and we don't know who is at fault."

"Always reflect on the situation if it

involves a family member. How would you feel?"

"We should be more considerate and care for each other and be kind added.

Nancy said the public should report incidents to the authorities.

"I saw the video. It should not have happened. Always go through the proper channels. The important thing is that the law took action."

"We will follow the police's findings and take necessary action under our jurisdiction," she said.

'Be kind to OKU on the job'

Many face discrimination and are often taken advantage of

By ALLISON LAI
and RAGANANTHINI VETHASALAM
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Be it the assault of a deaf e-hailing driver or the recent attack involving a trader in Terengganu, the challenges and risks that persons with disabilities (OKU) face in their day-to-day life are aplenty.

At work too, OKU find it tough when dealing with discrimination.

Stela (not her real name), who has Down syndrome, initially found it difficult to work as an administrative assistant at a home appliance firm as most of her colleagues were able-bodied and expected her to be on par with them.

"Sometimes a customer wanting to buy appliances is not comfortable dealing with me. There were times when I was scolded and made fun of for being different. They would ask my able-bodied colleague to attend to them instead," said the 27-year-old.

"I am grateful for having a job. I do have some good colleagues who help me out."

"I just can't control how customers react. Sometimes they ridicule me, but for the sake of earning a living, I just take it."

An e-hailing driver, who prefers to be known as Fife, said oftentimes drivers

with disabilities were misunderstood by customers who assume they were capable like others.

"I just hope people will understand our plight before judging us. OKU need a job to support themselves," said Fife who has encountered "all kinds of passengers".

The 40-year-old from Arang, who has a physical disability affecting his face, has been an e-hailing driver since 2019.

He said he has been cheated by non-paying passengers on several occasions, in addition to dealing with demeaning customers and their petty behaviour.

"The stigma is sometimes hard to deal with," he said.

Despite decreasing fares, Fife said some passengers still complained of high charges.

"I usually don't argue with passengers but contact the platform's customer service for assistance to ensure my protection as an OKU," he said.

Fife said it will be helpful if the e-hailing platform informed passengers of the driver's disability.

"This will help passengers understand their driver's condition and why, for example, they might not be able to assist with the luggage," he said.

Senator Isiah Jacob said he will raise matters related to OKU at the upcoming

Dewan Negara meeting, including a suggestion to call petitions for government servants involved in their mistreatment.

"The government should introduce this penalty," he said when contacted.

Isiah added that more awareness campaigns at schools, universities and community are needed.

He said he will be paying a visit to Ahmad Noh Al Faizan Jusoh who was assaulted by a group of men after crashing his motorcycle into a stall at the Pasar Tani Taman Astaka in Chukai, Terengganu, earlier this month.

Isiah said he also intended to visit the accident site to find out what had transpired that day.

Aeon Co (M) Bhd chief human resources officer Dr Kasuma Satria emphasised on the importance of "awareness, education and inclusion" in hiring and working with OKU.

"Their circumstances are not by choice. It is unfair to disregard or ignore them."

"Everyone has a role to play in creating an inclusive workplace and society."

Dr Kasuma said OKU have hopes and dreams and should be treated as ordinary members of society, which he believed was not too much to ask for.

"It is wrong if we fail to support them, and provide the basic level of respect and inclusion."

Disabled people have a right to drive, says Loke

IPOH: The government has no plan to revoke the driving licences of people aged as disabled, says Transport Minister Anthony Loke.

He said any decision regarding such would be made on a case-by-case basis by the Road Transport Department (RTJ).

He emphasised that RTJ could not automatically revoke the driving licences of individuals.

"The vast majority of disabled people are fully capable of driving or riding the cycle."

"If there is a specific or isolated incident involving a disabled driver, we will review whether their licence should be revoked."

"However, I want to stress that this is not our policy," he said after witnessing the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Ipoh Senator Sdn Bhd and (Annexe 3) Bhd here yesterday.

Loke was responding to a statement by the National Road Users Association proposing that RTJ cancel the licences of individuals certified as mentally disabled. He said it was unfair to generalise disabled individuals, as many could drive and were dependent on their licences for their livelihood.

"We have many e-hailing drivers who are disabled, including those who are or were, who can drive well," he added.

People with disabilities suffer from many biases, say experts

By IMRAN HILMY
imran@thestar.com.my

GEORGE TOWN: Living with disabilities comes with its own set of challenges, but for many, the struggle lies in overcoming social discrimination and being sidelined for being different.

James (not real name), who is visually impaired, encountered challenges at the workplace when colleagues questioned his employment in a company group chat.

Despite being dedicated to his job, he faced remarks from colleagues who asked their boss why a visually impaired person was hired, implying that he was dragging down the team's performance.

"I work hard and even though my sales performance may be low, I still have my customers and contribute to the company," said James, who works in a souvenir shop as a sales assistant.

In his 20s and partially blind, James said he has had no issues with his employer but felt sidelined by his colleagues' remarks.

Despite the setback, he remains committed to proving his capabilities, showing that inclusivity at the workplace was not just about hiring people with disabilities but also about fostering a supportive and respectful environment.



Challenges ahead: Visually impaired person Nicholas Chen at his workplace in Jalan Egan Jerman, Perang. — LIM BENG TATT/The Star

Another person with disabilities, who only wanted to be known as Mei, said he was paid on a part-time basis despite working regular working hours as a receptionist at a budget hotel.

"I work the same hours like other staff, but my employer said that I would only receive a part-timer's salary," he said.

Although he appreciates his employer for giving him the opportunity to work, Mei feels it is his right to be paid fairly.

He later sought guidance at St Nicholas Home where staff members helped him overcome his problem and talked to his employer.

Masseur Johari Saad, 54, however, has had issues with customers and not his employer.

He expressed frustration over customers' negative attitudes and prejudices, which made his work environment difficult at times.

"These customers, mostly men, have different attitudes. They do not empathise nor respect when speaking to me," he said.

Johari, who is visually impaired, needs more empathy and understanding needed for an inclusive society to be achieved.

St Nicholas Home general manager Carmen Chew said parents who have children with disabilities should seek help from NGOs, govt hospitals or occupational therapy services.

"For instance, by the age of two, a child should be able to speak."

"If a child is not talking by then, it should not ignore the signs. Even with schedules, it is essential for parents to engage with their children, encourage them to speak," she said.

Chew said parents should seek help from doctors or therapists.

A specialist, she added, could help identify if a child has a speech delay or underlying issues.

"If the child's hearing is normal, it is purely a speech delay, early intervention before the age of two can be effective in addressing the issue," she said.

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : HEALTH

Life expectancy with dementia

THE average life expectancy of people diagnosed with dementia ranges from about two to nine years, finds a systematic review of the latest evidence published in *The BMJ* medical journal weekly.

For women, it is about nine years when diagnosed at age 80 to 4.5 years at age 85, while for men, it is from 5.5 years at age 80 to just over two years at age 85.

The results also suggest that one third of people with dementia are admitted to a nursing home within three years of their diagnosis.

Nearly 30 million people worldwide receive a diagnosis of dementia every year.

However, survival estimates vary widely, while few studies have assessed prognosis (the likely course of the condition) in terms of time to nursing home admission.

"To better understand this, researchers in the Netherlands set out to determine the prognosis for people with a dementia diagnosis, both for remaining life expectancy and the time to nursing home admission."

Their findings are based on 351 studies published between 1984 and 2024 (33% of survival and 79 on nursing home admissions), involving more than five million people with dementia (average age 79, 63% women).

The studies were mostly from Europe and North America with an average follow-up time of seven years.

A study looks at how long people live and how long before they enter a nursing home after a dementia diagnosis.

After assessing study quality, the researchers found that the average survival from diagnosis appeared to be strongly dependent on age, ranging from 8.5 years at a mean age of 80 for women to 2.2 years at a mean age of 85 for men.

Overall, dementia reduced life expectancy by about two years for people with a diagnosis at age 85, three to four years with a diagnosis at age 80, and up to 12 years with a diagnosis at age 65. Average survival was up to 1.4 years longer among Asian populations, and 1.4 years longer among people with Alzheimer's disease compared with other types of dementia.

Average time to nursing home admission was just over three years.

Around 13% of people were admitted in the first year after diagnosis, increasing to a third (33%) at three years and more than half (57%) at five years.



Women tend to have a better life expectancy than men after being diagnosed with dementia.

However, the study authors note that these estimates are less reliable and should be interpreted with caution.

These are observational findings and the authors acknowledge their differences in study methods and inconsistencies reporting of measures such as socioeconomic status, race, disease severity and pre-existing conditions may have affected their estimates.

However, they point out that the meticulous search and data

extraction enabled analyses of the largest number of studies in date over a prolonged period, "offering potential for individualised prognostic information and care planning".

They conclude: "Future studies on individualised prognosis should ideally include patients at time of diagnosis, accounting for personal factors, social factors, disease stage and co-morbidity, while assessing relevant functional outcomes measures, alongside and beyond survival alone."

In a linked editorial, researchers from Norway say that although the understanding of survival with dementia has advanced substantially, the possibility of predicting the timing for nursing home admission remains.

"To enhance future health services and optimize quality of life for people with dementia and their families, it is crucial to continue to strive for more precise, context-sensitive insight into their condition."

Aerobics against Alzheimer's disease

IT'S widely recognised that intellectual activities, such as reading or playing games, help to delay the onset of Alzheimer's symptoms in older people.

But what about exercise? A joint study by British and Brazilian researchers suggests that aerobic exercise could play a key role in preventing and slowing down this neurodegenerative disease.

Published in the journal *Brain Research*, this study highlights how aerobic exercise acts directly on the aging brain, protecting nerve cells and restoring their balance.

Researchers from the University of Bristol (Britain) and the Federal University of São Paulo (Brazil) focused on the hippocampus, a key brain region for memory and learning.

"They studied the impact of physical activity – and more specifically aerobic exercise – on the main markers of Alzheimer's disease."

These markers are amyloid plaques, tau protein tangles and their accumulation in the cells that produce myelin, a substance that surrounds and protects nerve fibres while accelerating the transmission of electrical signals between neurons.

The researchers conducted an experiment on rodents, some of which followed an aerobic exercise programme.

They found that the more physically-active rodents showed a 43% reduction in tau protein tangles, a 20% reduction in amyloid plaques and a 28% drop in iron accumulation.

In addition, the number of pro-neurotrophic cells known as oligodendrocytes increased.

Inflammatory markers were also significantly reduced, with reductions ranging from 35% to



Researchers hypothesise that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

Researcher's hypothesis that aerobic exercise could help protect against Alzheimer's disease after positive results in rodents. — AFP

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 5

RUANGAN : NATION

The Star, M15, Nation

'Stop selling sweet poison'

Halt to sale of Apple S candies due to banned substance

UTRAJAYA: The Health Ministry has ordered a halt to the sale of Apple S brand candies after they were found to contain sibutramine, a banned substance used as an appetite suppressant. Sibutramine is a chemical compound that affects the brain to suppress appetite and is commonly found in weight management products.

The ministry confirmed in a statement that sibutramine is no longer registered for use and that the products violated food labelling requirements under the Food Regulations 1985.

"Among the violations are the lack of proper labelling in Bahasa

Malaysia and missing information about the manufacturer, packer, distributor, owner or importer of the products.

"As a result, this product is prohibited from being advertised or sold under Regulation 9 of the Food Regulations 1985," it stated.

The ministry instructed all traders, including online sellers, to immediately stop selling these products and to contact the nearest district health office for confiscation purposes.

In addition, all advertising platforms, including e-commerce sites and social media, are required to cease promoting these candies, Bernama report-

ed. Consumers currently using the products are advised to stop immediately and seek medical advice or treatment from health-care professionals.

The ministry also urged consumers to exercise caution and make informed decisions when purchasing food products that may contain banned substances.

Reported side effects of sibutramine include disruptions in heart function such as increased heart rate (tachycardia) even at rest.

Other side effects include dry mouth, nausea, constipation, difficulty sleeping, dizziness, men-

strual cramps and more.

The Health Ministry emphasised its commitment to monitoring the safety of food products in the market, including those suspected of containing controlled substances such as sildenafil, tadalafil, sibutramine, dexamethasone and prednisolone.

The ministry said it remains vigilant against health threats to consumers.

For food safety concerns, consumers can contact the nearest District Health Office, state Health Department, or visit the Health Ministry's public complaints website at <http://moh.spab.gov.my>.

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 9
RUANGAN : HEALTH

Concussion in young ones

This potentially dangerous condition is a possibility if your infant or toddler accidentally hits their head hard.



By RONIL ROBINSON and ELIZABETH B. PORTIN

JUST like older kids, babies and toddlers can get concussions. In fact, little ones face some extra risks.

But it can sometimes be harder to recognise the signs of concussion – a type of mild traumatic brain injury – in infants and toddlers.

They may not have the language skills yet to tell you how they feel.

The impact from a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or a fall to the body, causes the head to move quickly back and forth.

This sudden, back-and-forth impact causes the brain to twist inside the skull and stretch the brain cells.

Chemical changes happen that temporarily disrupt normal brain function.

An infant or toddler's head is large compared to their body. This makes them top-heavy so they are more likely than older children to fall headfirst when they lose their balance.

This is common as babies and young children often fall when they're learning to walk, run and explore.

Plus their neck muscles are still developing and offer less control of head movement. On top of that, a baby's skull is softer and thinner than an older child's.

While headfirst falls put infants at higher risk of concussion, any activity where they can hit their head or body hard enough can cause one.

Note these changes

Often, younger children show changes in their behaviour when they have a concussion.

They may become upset, cranky or extra fussy.

They may also become more clingy, and their sleeping and eating patterns can change.

You may notice these symptoms right after the injury, or in the days that follow.

Concussion symptoms may improve with rest at first, but can also worsen with increased activity afterward.

Take your child to the emergency department right away if they have been hit in the head or body, and have any of these symptoms:

- > Will not stop crying and cannot be consoled (for infants)
- > Will not nurse or eat (for infants)
- > Repeated vomiting or nausea
- > Slurred speech
- > Looks very drowsy or cannot be awakened
- > One pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) is larger than the other
- > Convulsions or seizures
- > Unusual behaviour or not acting like their usual self
- > Loss of consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously; the child should be carefully monitored).

Your child's doctor will get a detailed description of what happened, as well as your child's medical history.

They will also want to know how your child has been acting since the injury.

A parent or caregiver's report is often the most useful tool to diagnose a concussion in this age group as they are often not old enough to speak for themselves.

Watch out for changes in behaviour, among other symptoms, if your young one accidentally gets hit on the head or body as it may be a sign of a concussion. — TNS

Your child won't necessarily need any imaging tests of the brain or head, such as CT (computed tomography) or MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan.

However, it depends on the situation.

Doctors use specific reasons to decide when to do these tests, especially with younger children, to avoid unnecessary radiation exposure whenever possible.

It's important to remember that a concussion means that there's a problem with how the brain is working at the microscopic, cellular level, and not that there's any obvious structural damage.

This means that even if your child's imaging test is normal, they might still experience symptoms related to the concussion.

Take it easy

The main treatment for concussion is to take a step back from your child's usual daily

activities for a few days.

This is because they may only have enough stamina or feel well enough for shorter activities.

They may need to stay home for a few days from daycare or preschool, for example.

Your child may also need breaks from busy or loud environments until they are starting to act more like their usual self.

Daily play time may need to be reduced as your child recovers too.

This does not mean that they can't do anything. In fact, research has found that it's best not to cut out activity completely.

Let them play, but recognise that they may not be able to play as long as they usually do and may also benefit from more breaks.

You'll also need to be on the lookout for new or worsening symptoms.

In addition, it's important to avoid activities that would put them at risk for another head injury.

Although younger children need to be monitored, there is no need to periodically wake them up when they're asleep if they have a concussion unless their doctor advises you to do this.

Sleep can help the brain heal. Younger children may take longer to recover than older children after a concussion. This is because a younger child's brain is actively matur-

ing and growing. While older children often recover in about three to four weeks, younger children may take several weeks to get to full recovery.

Be sure to discuss any ongoing or worsening symptoms with your child's doctor.

This helps determine whether or further tests may be needed.

Here are some ways to help protect your child from concussion:

- > Put baby gates at the top and bottom of stairs.
- > Use other home safety products to "child-proof" your home, like window guards and non-slip bathtub mats.
- > Always keep a hand on your child while they're in furniture, including diaper-changing tables.
- > Secure heavy furniture, such as dressers, to the wall to prevent tip-overs.
- > Ensure your child is always properly buckled up in a car safety seat while riding in a vehicle.
- > Choose playgrounds with age-appropriate equipment.
- > You can always talk with your paediatrician about more ways to keep your child safe. — American Academy of Pediatrics/Tribune News Service

Ronil L. Robinson is a nurse practitioner with the Minds Matter Concussion Program at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board. Elizabeth B. Portin is an assistant professor of paediatrics at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago and a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Sports Medicine and Fitness.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 12
RUANGAN : LIFE AND TIMES

N17 MS 12 Life & Times

Sleep deprivation and its effect on mental health

A new study shows that sleep deprivation can inhibit the brain's ability to suppress unwanted memories and intrusive thoughts.
PICTURE CREDIT: RIDWAN, CELIK — GETTY IMAGES

Heal
By ETX Daily Up

SLEEP — an activity that takes up a third of our lives — is central to many essential biological processes. When sleep is disrupted, the effects on health are immediately felt, particularly on the brain, which becomes less able to filter out intrusive thoughts, a new study from scientists in the UK reveals.

In the study published in the journal 'PNAS', a British research team highlights the crucial importance of sleep in maintaining our mental well-being. A good night's sleep is thought to help the brain control intrusive

warning, and often out of context. Researchers demonstrated this in an experiment involving 85 healthy adults. Half of them had a healthy night's sleep, while the other half stayed awake all night.

Next, all participants were shown faces they had seen before, each previously associated with an image depicting a scene. Some of these scenes depicted emotionally negative situations, such as a car accident or a fight. For each face, participants had to either remember the associated scene, or attempt to suppress the memory of the scene.

Simultaneously, activity in the hippocampus, the small brain area usually involved in memory recall, was reduced. This indicates that these individuals had a better ability to shut down the reemergence of intrusive

teeners' brains reacted when they were asked to recall or suppress emotionally striking scenes.

In well-rested participants, they found increased activation of the right dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, a brain region essential for the control of thoughts, emotions and actions.

On the other hand, sleep-deprived people were unable to activate the area of the brain involved in suppressing unwanted memories. "Consequently, they could not quash memory-related processes in the hippocampus that

tion of the brain as it weakens all of the connecting traces of the memory, thereby inhibiting us from joining up all the dots to retrieve the full picture of the experience when it is triggered by an external stimulus," explains study coauthor Dr Scott Cairney, quoted in a news release.

These findings have particular resonance in the field of mental health. Anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are often linked to sleep problems.

By gaining a deeper understanding of brain mechanisms, the researchers hope to pave the way for targeted treatments combining behavioural therapies and improved sleep quality for people experiencing these conditions.

This study reaffirms the crucial importance of sleep in preserving our mental well-being. At a time when sleep disorders are on the rise worldwide, it highlights the need to ensure

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

The Sun, National, Ms 4

Children need to undergo eye exam at early age

➤ Kids who spend more time on digital devices are at risk of developing nearsightedness that could lead to serious vision issues, says ophthalmologist

BY QIRANA NABILLA MOHD RASHIDI
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Hospital Tunku Azizah paediatric ophthalmologist Dr Sangeetha Tharmathurai has called for children to be given early eye examinations to detect signs of ophthalmic conditions as part of efforts to reduce vision problems among the young.

She said the matter has become more critical after Health Minister Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said on Jan 16 that vision problems are one of the primary health issues among Year 1 pupils, particularly in the Federal Territory of Putrajaya where 215 of them have it.

"The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) recommends that children have their first comprehensive eye examination at around six months of age. The first visit helps ensure that a child's vision is developing properly and that any issues can be identified and treated before they impact his ability to learn and engage in daily activities.

"After that, children should have eye examinations at least once between the ages of three and five to assess vision development and screen for conditions such as amblyopia (lazy eye) or strabismus (crossed eyes).

Sangeetha said once children begin school, it's recommended that they undergo eye examinations every two years. This should increase to a higher frequency if they show signs of impaired vision.

She said recent studies have raised serious concerns about declining eye health in children, particularly with the increasing prevalence of myopia (nearsightedness), and that a 2023 AAO study also found that the rate of myopia in children has been rising globally.

"Children spending more time on digital devices for online learning and entertainment are now at higher risk of developing nearsightedness at an earlier age. If myopia is left untreated, can lead to an increased risk of glaucoma and retinal detachment.

"The Journal of the American Optometric Association has also reported a significant increase in cases of digital eye strain among children as young as five years old. This is a condition that was once more commonly associated with adults, and is a wake-up call for all of us to pay closer attention to excessive screen time."

Sangeetha urged parents and teachers to help identify early signs of paediatric vision problems, with one key sign being difficulty reading or focusing on tasks.

Clinical child psychologist Dr Noor Aishah Rosli said children with untreated vision problems are at a higher risk of developing anxiety and stress due to their ongoing challenges, and that struggling academically or socially can lead to diminished confidence, especially when they compare themselves to their peers. This can impact their emotional and psychological well-being.

"The situation worsens if they lack supportive friendships in the classroom which can make the children feel left behind. In some cases, they may even avoid attending school to escape their difficulties."

Noor Aishah said children with vision issues are also often mistakenly labelled as slow learners by peers or teachers as they may struggle to participate in group activities.

She said in many cases, such children do not realise that their difficulties stem from vision issues, which is why regular eye screenings are essential to identify problems early and provide timely intervention.

"With proper treatment, such as specialised glasses, these children can receive the support they need to thrive in their school and social environment," she said.

Noor Aishah also called on the government to collaborate with healthcare providers to offer subsidised or free vision screenings and spectacles as their cost and related ophthalmic treatments can be a challenge for many families.

"The government must provide these services to all schools. I've seen cases where children struggled to focus due to vision problems, and once treated, their focus and performance improved, which shows how important early detection can prevent academic and social challenges," she said.

Sarawak enforces new anti-rabies vaccination order

KUCHING: A new anti-rabies vaccination order has been enforced in Sarawak as the fight against the disease appears to have no end yet since its outbreak in 2017.

Sarawak Food Industry, Commodity and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Dr Stephen Rundi Utom said all dogs in the state are now required to undergo anti-rabies vaccination and receive annual boosters.

"Dog owners must ensure their pets are vaccinated. Failure to comply is punishable by a fine of up to RM2,500," he said in a statement, adding that unvaccinated dogs exposed to rabies would be euthanised.

On Wednesday, Rundi signed the order under Section 40(1) of the Veterinary Public Health Ordinance 1999.

He noted Kuching, Samarahan, Serian, Sri Aman, Kapit, Mukah and Bintulu divisions as being rabies-infected zones following the detection of new animal rabies cases.

He added that Sarawak recorded 123 positive cases from 889 animal samples last year, with Kuching leading with 79 cases, followed by Bintulu with 16, Samarahan with 10 and Serian with six, while Sri Aman, Kapit and Mukah recorded four cases each.

Rundi also said between Jan 6 and Jan 19 this year, three rabies-positive cases involving free-roaming pets were reported in Kuching and Samarahan.

The Veterinary Services Department (DVS) Sarawak, together with the immune belt enforcement team, has intensified anti-rabies vaccination programmes.

"The public can avail themselves of free dog anti-rabies vaccination at any government veterinary office during office hours or during mass vaccination events, which will be announced on the official DVS Sarawak Facebook page," he said.

Private veterinary clinics also offer vaccination and healthcare services for pets.

He said the State Health Department reported 83 cumulative human cases and 76 deaths since July 2017, including eight deaths in 2024.

He reminded dog owners to comply with licensing and identification requirements where fines would be imposed for non-compliance. - Bernama



Sangeetha said once children begin school, they should undergo eye checks every two years to detect signs of impaired vision. - AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THESUN

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 3
RUANGAN : NATIONAL



AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 12
RUANGAN : LYFE

Eating for mental well-being

Watch your food intake to stay positive, keep moods in check

ANICE physique and glowing skin are often associated with a healthy diet and lifestyle. However, food has an important role to play in mental health as well.

Mental health is more than just a buzz phrase. According to the World Health Organisation, at least 970 million individuals globally suffer from poor mental health, with anxiety and depression being the most common disorders.

While there are many factors contributing to this phenomenon and the connection between nutrition and mental health has long been studied, the role of nutrition in supporting mental well-being often receives little attention from the general public.

The brain needs nutrients to function - it uses glucose as its source of energy, proteins for neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin and fat to cover the sheath of nervous system fibres.

As our understanding grows and in light of ongoing research, we are seeing more and more evidence that our dietary habits can be linked with mental health. To date, several large cohort studies have clearly established a connection between nutrition and mental health disorders, such as depression and anxiety. Some studies have also established a connection between nutrition and the development of neurocognitive disorders such as dementia and Alzheimer's, owing to deficiencies in certain nutrients.

Here are three things we need to understand about this connection:

Our relationship with food is complicated

Our mood and behaviour are influenced by what we eat. There are many behavioural aspects that affect our eating habits, such as emotional eating, situations that trigger cravings for foods high in fat and sugar as well as stress-induced triggers that cause us to eat more or less than we normally would.

Life cycle is also a factor. The foundations of good nutrition begin during pregnancy and children adopt the eating habits of their parents for better or worse. Meanwhile, older persons may face various challenges, from functional issues such as difficulty accessing or cooking nutritious food for themselves, poor appetite and higher prevalence of chronic conditions and cognitive disorders.

In essence, the relationship between nutrition and mental well-being runs in both directions, with good nutrition supporting mental well-being, while those struggling with mental health issues are more likely to face challenges in this area.

Local healthy food options are plentiful

When it comes to healthy eating and food pyramids, the Mediterranean diet is often praised for its benefits. However, as its recommendations are based on foods more commonly found in countries bordering the



55% of Malaysians do not eat the recommended five portions of fruits and vegetables every day



Our moods and behaviours are influenced by what we eat



It is important to practise mindfulness in how we eat.
— PILES FROM PEELS

Mediterranean Sea (hence its name) such as Spain, Greece and Italy, the cost of these ingredients can be prohibitive for many.

Fortunately, its guiding principles can be easily adapted to a more local approach, known in some circles as the Mediterranean diet.

To begin, the base of this pyramid is not food-based at all but activity-based - the foundation of healthy eating begins with an active lifestyle, which helps to burn endorphins and supports mental well-being.

Thereafter, the primary food category is plant-based,

prioritising wholegrains, beans, pulses and nuts. These include chickpeas, safflower seeds, peanuts and soybeans, which are high in fibre and support the good bacteria in your gut microbiome. This, she emphasised, is an essential aspect of diet, as gut health is inextricably linked with mental health.

The next category is fish-based protein, such as sardines, which helps supply Omega-3. The smallest category is dairy such as low-fat yogurt and cheese, and meat-based protein like eggs and chicken to provide the amino acid tryptophan, which the brain needs

to produce serotonin.

Practise mindful eating

It is important to practice mindfulness in how and what we eat. This is because studies link eating habits with factors such as urbanisation, changes in the food industry, oversaturation and lack of time, which contribute to higher consumption of high-calorie and processed foods.

Mindfulness is key to overcoming this, and you can start by taking note of your own eating habits or triggers so you can determine if you eat more when you are stressed, bored or sleepy. This

will allow you to recognise these triggers instead of succumbing to them.

To help, try simple changes such as planning meals ahead of time, having healthy snacks or fruits on hand such as bananas, which are easy to eat on-the-go, and using food tracking apps to help incorporate healthier food options into your regular meals.

It always comes back to eating a greater variety of whole or minimally processed foods. This means more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and fish - we cannot run away from the basis of what it means to have a healthy diet.

However, citing the National Health and Morbidity Survey 2023, a whopping 95% of Malaysians do not eat the recommended five portions of fruits and vegetables every day. Furthermore, 50% of adults lead a sedentary lifestyle and 85% are not active in sports, fitness or leisure activities.

Five portions per day is not a lot - it is as simple as one and a half cups of vegetables and two slices of fruits such as papaya or pineapple. But we are not doing that, even though local fruits and vegetables are plentiful in Malaysia.

Moving forward, a holistic approach towards healthy eating and mental health is recommended, as they are interconnected.

This article is contributed by IMU University of Prof of Nutrition & Diabetics Prof Dr Winnie Chee.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 28
RUANGAN : KOMUNITI KITA

Hospital Pantai, Econsave anjur Program Menyantuni Komuniti

HOSPITAL Pantai Sungai Petani, Hospital Pantai Laguna Merbok dengan kerjasama Econsave Bandar Puteri Jaya (BPJ) dan Pasukan Bomba Sukarela Sungai Petani menganjurkan Program Menyantuni Komuniti Setempat 2025 di Pasar Raya Econsave Bandar Puteri Jaya (BPJ) Sungai Petani, Kedah baru-baru ini.

Seramai 15 keluarga, terdiri warga emas, pesakit kronik di sekitar kawasan Sungai Petani dipilih menerima sumbangan berupa hamper, duit raya, barangan keperluan asas, termasuk sumbangan ditaja oleh pakar-pakar perubatan dari kedua hospital itu.

Setiap keluarga menerima sumbangan sebanyak RM8,000

termasuk baucar bernilai RM400 untuk membeli pelbagai barangan di pasar raya itu.

Turut hadir Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Hospital Pantai Sungai Petani dan Hospital Pantai Laguna Merbok, Tio Bee Chan, Pengurus Besar Econsave Wilayah Utara, Zamzuri Mansor, Pengerusi Pasukan Bomba Sukarelawan Bandar Sungai Petani, Leong Beng Tat dan Pengurus Econsave BPJ, M. Kavikumar.

■ SEBAHAGIAN dari penerima sumbangan bergambar dengan penganjur sempena Program Menyantuni Komuniti Setempat 2025 di Pasar Raya Econsave Bandar Puteri Jaya (BPJ) Sungai Petani, Kedah baru-baru ini.

- UTUSAN/ABD RAZAK OSMAN



