



**MAJLIS PERBANDARAN AMPANG JAYA**  
**BAHAGIAN PERHUBUNGAN AWAM DAN SEKRETARIAT**  
MENARA MPAJ, JALAN PANDAN UTAMA,  
PANDAN INDAH, SELANGOR,  
55100 KUALA LUMPUR

**KERATAN AKHBAR**  
**18 FEBRUARI 2019 (ISNIN)**

**AKHBAR**

**MUKA SURAT**

**The Star**

- Biting reality of dengue

02-03



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Akhbar	The Star
Tajuk Berita	Biting reality of dengue
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**StarMetro** GREATER KLANG VALLEY

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## Biting reality of dengue

As the number of cases continues to soar, Malaysians are advised to take the dangers seriously and understand fact from fiction. >2&3

**No stone unturned:** The health authorities want residents to thoroughly check and clean up their houses and surrounding areas. — MOHD FAIHAN GHANI/The Star



### TRAFFIC MATTERS

The road closure at Jalan Putra Permai (Puchong-bound) will continue until Feb 28. The closure is to facilitate MRT-related works from 10pm to 5am. Motorists travelling from Jalan Putra Permai heading towards Jalan PP33 and those from Jalan PP33 to Jalan Putra Permai are advised to follow traffic signage and use the diverted routes provided.

### MOTORCYCLE BRIDGE

The Petaling Jaya City Council will reopen the motorcycle bridge at Jalan Railway 1/2 until Jalan PJS 1/26 beginning Feb 19. The reopening is to allow motorists from Petaling Jaya South to use the bridge as an alternative route instead of the New Pantai Expressway-Jalan Templer. The bridge was closed since Jan 7 to facilitate works. For details, call 03-7958 4221 (MBPJ).

### TALK ON SUICIDE

The Befrienders KL will hold a public talk 'Hope & Pain: Healing after The Suicide of a Loved One' by consultant psychiatrist Dr Uma Visvalingam on Feb 23, from 10am to 11.30am, at Bilik Bunga Raya, Maktab Koperasi Malaysia, 103, Jalan Templer, Petaling Jaya. Admission is by registration only. To register, email admin@befrienders.org.my or go to <http://bit.ly/2GeuRGy>

### EDUCATION FAIR

The Klang Education Fair will be held on Feb 23 and 24, 11am to 7pm, at Klang Parade. Visitors can enquire about courses and educational opportunities that range across numerous industries including healthcare, automotive, fashion design and 3D animation. Organised by Citi World, the Klang Education Fair will also feature language schools and institutions catering to primary and secondary education.

### ALZHEIMER'S CARE

Alzheimers Disease Foundation Malaysia (ADFM) is holding a Dementia Care Skills Training for family caregivers of Alzheimer's patients at ADFM Secretariat on Feb 23 and 24, at PJ Day Care Centre, 6, Lorong 11/8E, Section 11, Petaling Jaya this weekend. Admission is free. Prior registration is compulsory. To register, email [jennyho8@gmail.com](mailto:jennyho8@gmail.com) or [jenny@adfm.org.my](mailto:jenny@adfm.org.my). For details, call 016-608 2513.

### TAX REBATE

The Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) will give a RM10 rebate as an incentive to the first 30,000 who pay their 2019 assessment tax online via [www.mpsj.gov.my](http://www.mpsj.gov.my) before Feb 28. To qualify, you must register at the website as a myMPSJ member and do not have any outstanding assessment taxes.

### STAMP FAIR

The Philatelic Society of Malaysia (PSM) will organise its first stamp fair for the year on March 2 and 3 at MBPJ Community Library, Lot 389 Jalan Selangor, Section 3, Petaling Jaya, from 9.30am to 5.30pm. There will be a display of philatelic exhibits by stamp dealers. Membership to PSM is also available at the PSM counter. Pos Malaysia will also be present to showcase commemorative stamps. Entrance is free. For details, call 012-604 3563 (Maniam) or 012-679 7931 (Wong).



Dustbin lids with grooves are also a popular spot for mosquitoes to breed. It is vital that you check not just your home, but also the surrounding area to ensure there are no breeding spots.

Footwear left unattended and exposed to rain can also potentially be a breeding spot for Aedes mosquitoes.

By PRIYA MENON  
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THE figures make grim reading – close to 10,000 dengue cases recorded nationwide since January, with 16 deaths.

We are in the grips of a dengue epidemic, and despite the growing alarm among healthcare professionals and the hard work by local authorities, Malaysians are seemingly blasé about the dangers. The twin threats of dengue and its sibling Chikungunya are both borne by the deadly Aedes mosquito.

What is most galling to the authorities is that both diseases can easily be eradicated if people, instead of relying on myths and rumours, take time to understand the Aedes mosquito.

Unfortunately, most people turn a deaf ear to the warnings and prevention methods while others rely on unverified information, making it difficult for the authorities to spread awareness on the problem.

StarMetro spoke to Selangor Health, Welfare, Women Empowerment and Family Committee chairman Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud, who said people do not understand the behaviour of the Aedes mosquito.

"Understanding its behaviour and pattern will help us eliminate the dangers," she said.

And indeed, the danger is clear and present, especially in Selangor.

The state recorded a 204% increase in cases up to Feb 9, to 10,479 cases compared with the same period in 2018.

The state also recorded the highest number of Chikungunya

# Understanding the Aedes mosquito

## Eliminating the twin threats of dengue and Chikungunya requires the people's cooperation

cases, with 65 cases recorded up to Feb 15. However, none of the victims were warned and all are reportedly in stable condition.

In order to combat the epidemic in an effective manner, it is vital that we separate fact from fiction.

Dr Siti Mariah said a common myth is that the Aedes mosquito only contracts the virus after biting into an infected person.

"In reality, an adult mosquito with the dengue virus can also pass on the infection to the eggs it lays – a process known as transovarial transmission," she said.

There are four different virus serotypes (variations of species) and the condition of the patient worsens with subsequent infections, even leading to dengue hemorrhagic fever, which can be fatal.

The initial symptoms for Chikungunya, meanwhile, are similar to dengue, and though it is not fatal, the patient can suffer for months if untreated.

**Clean home is no guarantee**

According to Dr Siti Mariah, most



Rubbish, including renovation materials and construction waste, disposed of indiscriminately offer great spots for clean water to collect.

people have the common misconception that their chances of contracting dengue are reduced significantly if their houses are clean.

"Mosquitoes can fly as far as 500m, so if their neighbourhood or even their neighbour's houses have breeding spots, they have a high chance of getting bitten by an infected mosquito," she added.

The state government's challenge now is to teach people about the mosquito and its habitat so they are aware of the steps to take to eradicate the breeding spots of eggs and larvae.

One thing that people need to consider is that the Aedes mosquito eggs are very resilient.

"Most people do not know that the eggs only need very little water to hatch; the size of a 20 sen coin. To make matters worse, the eggs can actually survive without water for up to six months," Dr Siti Mariah stressed.

It is also important to scrub the walls of containers properly where eggs are usually found. "This is because the eggs can survive even after the water is thrown away. They will hatch when they come in

contact with water again later," she added.

The most common breeding spots are places that are crowded like *pasar malam*, morning markets and wet markets.

This is partly due to the lack of cleanliness in the area after visitors throw garbage indiscriminately including cups, plastic containers and bags nearby.

The sub-standard maintenance by contractors hired by local councils does not help matters, as the garbage left behind can end up turning into breeding grounds.

Neighbourhood areas that are also prone are playgrounds and green lungs.

"People are getting complacent, thinking their home is clean. However, they need to look at their surroundings as well," she added.

Dr Siti Mariah said the only way to eradicate the problem is to ensure there are no breeding spots at all.

In fact, the mosquito breeding spots can be found in unexpected places, including tyres, in-between banana trees and pandan leaves, the gutter, toys left outside the



## Chikungunya VS Dengue

**Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus.**

**Symptoms**  
Symptoms last 5 days

- Sudden and continuous high fever
- Joint pains at the tip of the fingers, wrists, ankles, sensitivity in the bones.
- Fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting

**Aedes aegypti**

**Symptoms**  
Symptoms usually last for 2-7 days, after an incubation period of 4-10 days

- Sudden and continuous high fever
- Red spots on the skin
- Severe headache
- Bleeding through the mouth, nose and skin
- Muscle and joint pains
- Pain behind the eyes and head
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pains
- Nausea, vomiting

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**Myths**

- Only those infected by dengue previously are prone to Chikungunya.
- Chikungunya is worse than dengue
- Aedes mosquitoes breed in clogged and dirty drains only
- Aedes mosquitoes only breed in garbage and dirty places

**Facts**

- Chikungunya has fewer deaths compared to dengue fever
- You can get Chikungunya even if you have never had Dengue
- Aedes mosquitoes need clean, stagnant water to breed
- Aedes mosquitoes only need a little bit of stagnant water to breed

Source: Malaysian Health Ministry



Illegal dumpsites offer plenty of nooks and crannies where Aedes mosquitoes can lay their eggs. The eggs need very little water to hatch; they can also survive up to six months without water.

house, air-con compressors, and even on the grooves of dustbin covers.

According to Selangor local councils, these are some of the common spots they check when conducting spot checks on homes and business premises.

**Lack of cooperation**

Shah Alam City Council communications head Shahrin Ahmad said one of the most prone dengue spots are in areas with student accommodation.

He said students leave food containers and polystyrene packets in locations that can collect water when they balik kampung for the holidays.

"Since there is no one at home, we cannot check the premises and eliminate the eggs and larvae," Shahrin said.

He also said that many homeowners refused to cooperate with the local councils during their visits.

Their aim, added Shahrin, is to educate the house owners on the potential breeding grounds, yet many refuse to open the doors to the MBSA health officers.

Klang Municipal Council's (MPK) health director Azmi Muji, meanwhile, said the council has found breeding spots in weird spots including abandoned toilets, unoccupied houses and even coconut shells in wet markets.

"This year, MPK and the District Health Department will take strict action against premises owners who have allowed their place to become breeding spots," he added.

Klang district recorded the second highest number of cases following Petaling district with 2,644 cases in the first week of February.

The authorities are doing their best to deal with the dengue and Chikungunya epidemic, but ultimately, it is up to the people to have a greater awareness of their surroundings and ensure that there are no suitable breeding grounds for the Aedes mosquito.

## 'Over 10,000 dengue cases recorded in Selangor until Feb 9'



Health officers and Dr Khalid (second from left) checking stacks of plastic containers in the compound of a house.

By **VJVENTHI NAIR**  
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PAILS, plastic containers, tyres and vases, the usual places for water to collect and for Aedes mosquito to breed, were uncovered during a joint anti-dengue operation at Taman Bukit Teratai in Ampang.

Selangor Health director Datuk Dr Khalid Ibrahim said Saturday's operation comprised a team of 150 from his department, Hulu Langat District Health office and Ampang Jaya Municipal Council.

"As of 1pm, 221 premises were inspected, 236 were locked, and 17 looked vacant.

"However, six indoor and 10 outdoor live mosquito breeding

grounds were found," he said, adding that culprits will be compounded RM500 without appeal especially at hotspot areas.

Dr Khalid said last year, 45,349 dengue cases were recorded in Selangor, which is 56.3% of total dengue cases in the country.

"This year, there were 10,479 cases until Feb 9, which is a 204% increase compared to the same period last year.

"Death due to dengue also increased by 140%, from 41 cases this year compared to 12 last year.

"In Hulu Langat district, the number of cases increased by 216% this year until Feb 9 with three deaths, compared to one death last year," he said, adding that there were 167 localities in

Hulu Langat with dengue cases with 27 being hotspots.

"Other factors that contribute to the increasing trend of dengue cases are poor cleanliness, abuse of vacant land, illegal waste dumping, storing containers in back lanes and abandoned houses.

To put a stop to the increasing trend, Selangor Health Department launched the Selangor Gempur Aedes 2019 campaign.

Among the proactive efforts include collaborating with the district health offices and local authorities through the One Stop Crisis Centre to pool resources and logistics, to locate and destroy mosquito breeding grounds, larviciding and spreading awareness, among others.