

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO  
MUKA SURAT : 8  
RUANGAN : LOKAL

## Agong berkenan terima menghadap Fahmi, Dzulkefly

**Kuala Lumpur:** Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim berkenan menerima menghadap Menteri Komunikasi Fahmi Fadzil dan Menteri Kesihatan Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad di Istana Negara, di sini, semalam.

Sebelum menerima menghadap Fahmi, Sultan Ibrahim berkenan meluangkan masa menandatangani hampir 400 kad Aidilfitri untuk diutus kepada

rakyat yang mengirimkan ucapan, menurut catatan di laman Facebook Seri Paduka Baginda.

Fahmi turut berpeluang melihat sendiri Seri Paduka Baginda menandatangani kad ucapan berkenaan.

Pada sesi menghadap itu, Fahmi mempersembahkan kepada Yang di-Pertuan Agong mengenai perkembangan media sosial di negara ini.

Hadir sama, Pengerusi Suruhanjaya Komunikasi dan Multimedia Malaysia (MCMC) Tan Sri Mohamad Salim Fateh Din.

Sementara itu, Dzulkefly mempersembahkan kepada Seri Paduka Baginda mengenai perkembangan terkini perkhidmatan kesihatan negara serta perancangan baharu Kementerian dalam menambah baik fasiliti kesihatan kepada rakyat. - Bernama



FAHMI berpeluang melihat Sultan Ibrahim menandatangani kad Aidilfitri.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO  
MUKA SURAT : 12  
RUANGAN : LOKAL

### 148 kompaun bernilai RM15,450 terhadap peniaga bazar

**Marang:** Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Terengganu (JKNT) mengeluarkan 148 kompaun berjumlah RM15,450 kepada peniaga bazar Ramadan di seluruh negeri setakat Ahad lalu.

Pengarahnya Datuk Dr Kasemani Embong berkata, kompaun itu dikeluarkan atas pelbagai ke-

salahan termasuk pengendali makanan tidak mempunyai suntikan antitifooid, tidak jalani latihan pengendalian makanan serta tahap kebersihan diri dan premis yang tidak memuaskan.

Beliau berkata, selain itu 78 sampel makanan diambil di premis terpilih termasuk Bazar Ra-

madan dan gerai makan bagi memastikan juadah dijual bersih dan selamat untuk pengguna.

"Untuk tahun ini kita ada 3,840 tapak bazar Ramadan yang berdaftar dengan Pihak Berkuasa Tempatan (PBT) dan 352 gerai makanan persendirian di seluruh negeri," katanya.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN  
MUKA SURAT : 27  
RUANGAN : NEGERI

## Kes strok haba, Covid-19 di Selangor masih terkawal

**SHAH ALAM** - Kes melibatkan strok haba dan Covid-19 di Selangor masih dalam keadaan terkawal, kata Exco Kesihatan Awam dan Alam Sekitar Selangor, Jamaliah Jamaluddin.

Menurutnya, setakat ini pihaknya sentiasa menjalin kerjasama erat dengan semua jabatan dan agensi kerajaan bagi memantau situasi tersebut.

"Pemerhatian mendapati kes strok haba masih terkawal dan kita mempunyai kapasiti untuk mengambil tindakan segera," katanya ketika ditemui pada Majlis Iftar bersama Pengamal Media di sini pada Isnin.

Jamaliah berkata, kes Covid-19 di negeri ini juga dalam keadaan sederhana sejak beberapa bulan lalu.

Bagaimanapun, beliau menasihatkan

orang ramai agar mengamalkan langkah pencegahan terutama pada Aidilfitri.

"Biasanya, kes melibatkan Covid-19 mencatatkan peningkatan ketika musim perayaan.

"Justeru, kita digalakkan memakai pelitup muka dan minum lebih banyak air jika cuaca panas," ujarnya.

Tambahnya, masyarakat juga perlu peka dengan saranan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) dan maklumat keadaan cuaca daripada Jabatan Meteorologi Malaysia (MetMalaysia).

KKM sebelum ini mendapati sebanyak 28 kes penyakit berkaitan haba dilaporkan sehingga 25 Mac lalu.

Ia melibatkan 19 kes kelesuan haba dan sembilan kes strok haba manakala tiada kes kejang haba dilaporkan.



Jamaliah (tengah) bergambar bersama pengamal media pada majlis iftar di Shah Alam pada Isnin.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 5

RUANGAN : NATION

## Eight down with food poisoning

**PORT DICKSON:** Eight food poisoning cases suspected to be caused by mussels have been reported here.

Negeri Sembilan Health Department director Datuk Dr Harlina Abdul Rashid said two people were admitted to the intensive care unit of the district hospital after they started experiencing paralysis.

"Five others have been warded for treatment and one individual was given outpatient treatment," she said.

The first case was reported on Monday.

She said the eight victims were members from different families and are believed to have eaten mussels they bought from two markets in the district.

They experienced headaches, numbness in the hands and feet, and muscle weakness.

Dr Harlina said the state health and fisheries departments have launched a probe into the incident.

She advised those with similar symptoms after having consumed mussels or other bivalves to immediately seek treatment.

AKHBAR : THE STAR  
MUKA SURAT : 6  
RUANGAN : NATION

Reports by MARTIN CARVALHO and FAZLEENA AZIZ

# Screen time leads to spectacles time

## Prolonged use of digital devices causing more cases of myopia in younger kids

**PETALING JAYA:** An increasing number of children in the country, some as young as three years old, are now wearing glasses as a result of lifestyle changes, with extended use of digital devices posing an additional risk, say experts.

Paediatrics ophthalmologist and strabismus surgeon Dr Norazah Abdul Rahman expressed concern over the risks posed by the prolonged use of digital devices and mobile phones by young children.

"I receive a lot of children with abnormal blinking and eye rubbing. This is commonly due to dry eye, which can be treated with eye drops and limiting screen time," she said when contacted yesterday.

If left untreated at an early stage, she said a child's blurred vision could become permanent, resulting in myopia or near-sightedness.

Dr Norazah said recent lifestyle changes have resulted in children developing myopia at a much younger age.

"A decade ago, myopia would usually be seen among children aged between 10 and 15, but I am now seeing kids between three and four years old who need to wear corrective glasses," she added.

She recommended parents impose screen time limits for their children, including using the "harmon distance", the optimal



distance during reading or other activities requiring visual focus.

"If possible, allow the child to spend a reasonable amount of time outside during the day doing other activities," said Dr Norazah.

"Some countries, such as Australia and China, actually require parents to make sure that their child spends 120 minutes outdoors to prevent myopia," she added.

On the dangers of exposure to higher-level ultraviolet (UV) radiation to a child's eyesight, Dr Norazah said that this was not a major issue as most parents would not usually allow their children to be under the sun for hours.

Eye specialist Datuk Dr Muhaya Mohamad said that there would especially be an increase in myopia affecting young children if both parents are myopic.

"We are seeing more young children wearing glasses these days, which can be attributed to the widespread use of digital devices. And the chances of a child developing myopia increase by 40% due to genetics if both

parents are myopic," she said.

Dr Muhaya added that prolonged staring at a device screen without blinking can cause eye-strain in children, which would result in a dry-eye condition, causing blurred vision.

"A person normally blinks about 14 times a minute. However, a child may get too focused on the device screen, resulting in infrequent blinking and the dry-eye condition," she said, adding that the condition is easily treated with eye drops.

Dr Muhaya said some parents may inadvertently contribute to their children's frequent use of digital devices.

"A child needs attention, love and a sense of feeling important, and will find the digital device more appealing if they feel neglected," she added.

Besides limiting screen time, she said parents should consider engaging in outdoor activities with their young children to prevent myopia.

Both Dr Norazah and Dr Muhaya said that no comprehensive studies have been carried out to determine the extent of myopia affecting young Malaysians in the digital age.

Based on the World Health Organisation (WHO), myopia has been on the rise over the last decade and it is projected that half of the world's population will have it due to lifestyle changes since the Covid-19 pandemic.

## All about setting limits, say parents

**PETALING JAYA:** Parents are not giving in to their children's obsession with gadgets, but many have instead established a routine for "screen time" with the aim of protecting their eyesight and curbing potentially addictive behaviour.

Sandy Ngiam, a 42-year-old marketing controller from Kuala Lumpur, discovered her eight-year-old son had developed a worrying habit of excessive screen time. To address this, she decided to limit his access to electronic devices and only allow him to use them on weekends.

"Before I pass the gadget to him, I have to remind him when I will take it back. Once you set the expectation earlier, you can avoid them becoming upset and getting into arguments later," she said.

Senior bank officer Shidah A. 50, from Ulu Kelang, found that her kids have a hard time letting go of their gadgets, prompting her to stop letting them use devices on weekdays.

"They were on their iPads all the time, to the point of being hooked. I decided I had enough by taking the iPads to the office and locking them in my drawer. I bring them back every weekend, so they essentially have a limited



**Bad for eyes:** More children in the country are now wearing glasses due to the extended use of digital devices. — AZHAR MAHFUF/The Star

usage time. "I felt that my kids were angrier and more frustrated all the time. Their minds were also not evolving due to their obsession with gadgets," she said.

As a parent, executive Fazilah Bashah, 31 from Ampang, feels giving kids the best of both worlds is essential, saying that it's important to be actively engaged in both the real world while keeping up with modern technology.

"Sometimes it can be hard to balance both, but we must put

our foot down and have a timetable for tablets and electronic devices. Personally, I let my kids play with iPads, but only on weekends," she said, adding that she also lets them use the devices as a reward.

"Most of the time, they will be on TV watching gift-unboxing (videos), *Gabby Doll House* or other children's programmes. So far, I can see that I can control their device time and be able to have them return their devices by giving them prior notice," she said.

### How can I protect my children's eyes from UV?

Sunglasses are available in many sizes, including kids' sizes. But sunglasses may not be practical for all kids. A hat may be a more practical solution.

### How do sunglasses work?

All sunglasses work by blocking and/or reflecting the harmful UV light away from the eyes.

The UV coating on lenses absorbs and reflects harmful light.

An anti-reflective coating on the inside of the lenses prevents light from bouncing back into the eyes.

Polarised lenses help reduce glare from horizontal surfaces like water, snow and sand.

Different tints are used for specific outdoor activities (e.g. yellow or orange for hunting).

### How do I choose a pair of sunglasses?

UV-blocking lenses are the most important feature of all sunglasses, but include these considerations as well:

#### Lens material

Sunglasses lenses can be made from a variety of materials, including plastic or polycarbonate. Look for lenses that provide 99% to 100% protection from UVA and UVB or marked as having a UV400 rating.

#### Fit

Choose comfort over style when selecting sunglasses frames. A good fit will minimise light that enters the eye from the top, bottom and sides of the lenses.

#### Use

Choose sunglasses according to activity such as near water or sand as reflective surfaces increase UV exposure by reflecting light. Polarised lenses are good for reducing glare from water.

Source: National Eye Institute, US

### How to limit exposure time to digital screens

(based on the American Academy of Paediatrics guidelines)

For children younger than 18 months old, avoid the use of digital screens other than for video chatting.

For children aged 2 to 5 years, limit digital screen use to 1 hour/day of high-quality programmes.

For children aged 6 and older, there should be a consistent time limit as well as adequate time for sleeping and physical exercise.

Encourage outdoor activities to keep good health, form bonds and as a form of distraction.

Adjust the height of the chair so that the laptop/tablet screen is at 15 degrees below eye level.

### Correct usage of digital device

The digital screen should be at least 30-40cm away from their eyes.

Devices should be used under proper lighting, preferably natural light from the sun.

Consider getting a blue light screen or filter to reduce the level of blue light getting into their eyes.

Source: Paediatric ophthalmologist Dr Norazah Abdul Rahman

The Star graphics

AKHBAR : THE STAR  
MUKA SURAT : 13  
RUANGAN : VIEWS

Views 13



## YOUR OPINION

EMAIL: editor@thestar.com.my or  
MAIL: The Editor, Menara Star, 15, Jalan  
16/11, Section 16, 46350 Petaling Jaya.  
Letters must carry the sender's full name,  
address and telephone number.  
A pseudonym may be included.

# Solve specialists issue soon

IN the public life of a nation, issues will always crop up requiring the wisdom of the authorities to sort out sensibly while always putting the people's interest and welfare first.

It is obvious that the health-care needs of any society is of primary importance, and many governments and institutions have been brought down when they failed to provide the fair and just care that society needs.

Thus, when we consider issues regarding the training of doctors to become specialists, the institutions and academic bodies concerned must communicate with each other and arrive at a practical, sensible and fair solution.

It was revealed recently that Malaysian doctors who qualified as Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) in cardiothoracic surgery had their applications to become full surgeons here rejected by the Malaysian Medical Council ("Disheartened doctors find easier ways to practise abroad", *The Star*, March 23; online at [bit.ly/star\\_surgeons](http://bit.ly/star_surgeons)).

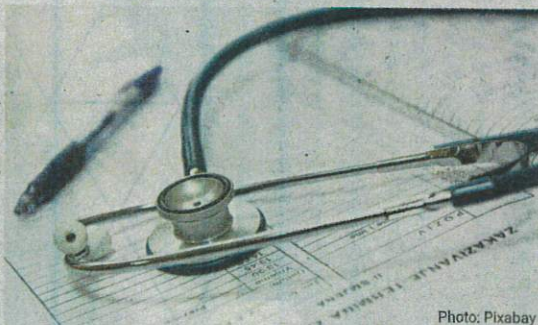


Photo: Pixabay

In a news report, the Health Ministry's chief of cardiothoracic surgical services Datuk Dr Basheer Ahamed Abd Kareem pointed out that the RCSEd qualification was "recognised in Malaysia until 2022, after which the MMC chose not to recognise it".

The RCSEd was founded by King James IV in 1505 – 519 years ago – and stands proudly as one of the oldest surgical institutions in the world. It has a longstanding reputation as an institution of

the highest integrity and excellence. Since then of course, many other good and great institutions of training and teaching for the medical profession have been established around the world, including in Malaysia.

Malaysians should be proud of the fact that, since 2018, Kuala Lumpur is one of the RCSEd's only international offices, apart from a regional centre in Birmingham, Britain. Furthermore, Malaysia's medical institutions have longstanding relationships

and ties with the Royal Colleges of London and Ireland in addition to Edinburgh's.

With this historical background in mind, I believe the Health Ministry and the Malaysian Medical Council made a wise decision to allow for a parallel pathway for training so that we can train and accredit more specialists, quicker, to serve in the country.

(The Health Ministry instituted a training system called the Parallel Pathway Programme in 2016 that allows doctors to train for specialisation in institutions outside the country.)

To write off and not recognise any institution of higher education with a 500-year history of experience is clearly absurd and ridiculous.

We trust that the relevant authorities will meet, discuss the issue and come to the right decision and solve this matter soon.

**DR SNG KIM HOCK**  
Executive committee  
Association of Specialists in  
Private Medical Practice  
Malaysia