# Mobile app to inform public of dengue outbreaks developed

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KOTA SAMARAHAN: A mobile app is being developed by a team led by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) to inform the public of current and future dengue fever outbreaks.

Dr S Dhesi Baha Raja, from Unimas' Faculty of Medicine and Health Science, said the model of this app titled 'Dengue Index Model' won first place at the Big App Challenge in Cyberjaya last month.

He said the team is now planning to turn this model into a mobile app for both Apple and Android smartphone users.

"It's very important to share information. It's no point having so much data, but not sharing it.

What we are trying to do is to get clearance for the data to share with the public so that you will be able to know the probability of an outbreak in your area. So when you know there is probability of it happening, you will take steps to clean your house.

"What we are trying to do now is to develop this app for Android and Apple. So meaning that you will be able to access the information, not only future outbreaks, but also the number of current cases including in your surrounding areas," he told a press conference, which was chaired by Unimas vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohamad Kadim Suaidi, yesterday.

Dr Dhesi, who is on a Ministry of Health (MOH) scholarship to pursue his PhD in Unimas, said the team plans to present this model to the Prime Minister's Department on Dec 15.

He said the model developed using data from the Meteorological Department and MOH has an accuracy rate of 87 per cent in predicting the next area of outbreak in Malaysia.

The accuracy rate was 95 per cent when the model managed to predict an outbreak in Pantai Dalam, Kuala Lumpur this year, he added.

"Though not 100 per cent accurate, a rate of 87 per cent to 95 per cent is actually a very good model already.

"That is very good enough for the community. This also allows the Ministry of Health and other relevant agencies to intervene in the early stage rather than taking an inactive approach," he said.

He also pointed out that dengue outbreaks are on an upward trend this year nationwide and having a model like this would be of great help.

Source: The Borneo Post