New technique to kill aedes

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>PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA: The Institute for Medical Research has come up with an innovative technique to stop the breeding of aedes mosquitos.

Health Minister Datuk Liow Tiong Lai said although it was already in place, IMR was further testing it to see whether the chemical used on the Aedes aegypti was harmful to people.

"If the study proves it’s not harmful and does not affect the ecological system, then it will be a breakthrough," he told the New Straits Times.

Liow, who did not want to disclose details of the research and the technique developed, will announce the finding once it was finalised. He said it was important the technique does not destroy all mosquitoes.

Liow said the government would continue doing research on dengue.

On local universities not given enough funding to carry out such research activities, he said he would consider giving universities funding for local scientists to do so as this would strengthen dengue research in the country.

On Sunday, Universiti Malaya’s Department of Medical Microbiology head Prof Dr Sazaly Abu Bakar was quoted as saying that funding was sorely lacking for local scientists to carry out research although Malaysia had the expertise to do a lot of it.

Dengue, Dr Sazaly had said was Malaysia’s problem, it was endemic and yet the government was not spending any money on it.

Liow admitted a lot of things have to been looked into in the fight against dengue, including the vector-controlling measures and whether the correct concentration of chemicals was being used to kill the aedes mosquitoes.

"I know all these issues need to be looked into seriously although we are combating the menace through campaigns, fogging activities, gotong-royong and educational awareness."

He also said they needed to change the attitude of the people in taking care of the environment and preventing the spread of aedes mosquitoes.

"The rakyat have a responsibility, as much as the government, in fighting the menace."