

# Researchers create soap that prevents mosquito bites

**HULU TERENGGANU:** A group of 13 researchers have come up with a soap and body lotion that can prevent mosquito bites on humans.

The product research project head, Dr Mohamad Shukor Yusof, 58, said the idea to create both products came about after a discussion among them.

"Coincidentally, when we met last February, Malaysia was experiencing a serious dengue outbreak, so we discussed how we could protect Malaysians from mosquito bites.

"We decided to use *serai wangi* (citronella) leaves and a combination of other herbs which proved to be effective in preventing mosquito bites. Clinical tests were conducted at Universiti Sains Malaysia in April using the soap and body lotion formulations that we created from these herbal plants," he said.

Met at his clinic in Kuala Berang, here, Dr Mohamad Shukor said the team was assisted

by Prof Dr Darah Ibrahim from the university and Prof Dr Latiffah Abdul Latiff from Universiti Putra Malaysia in the research project.

"This research project is not only aimed at helping the Government educate the public on the dangers of dengue fever but also at creating opportunities for those involved in agriculture to plant *serai wangi* and other herbal plants on a commercial basis after this.

"The products are also effective in preventing bites of other insects on humans and to ward off flies," he said, adding that the two products with the brand name "Vecto" could also be used for aromatherapy to relieve stress.

The two products have not been commercialised yet, but Dr Mohamad Shukor and his team hope to market them soon to help prevent dengue fever caused by the *Aedes* mosquito. — Bernama.