

Online job portal helping cancer survivors find employment again

By **LOH FOON FONG**

foonfong@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: An online job matching portal has been devised to assist cancer patients who lost their jobs while undergoing treatment.

The concept was mooted by a public health specialist to motivate and give hope to these patients.

For this, Universiti Putra Malaysia

lecturer Dr Sri Ganesh Muthiah was awarded the Best Invention of Malaysia and the Romanian Inventors Forum Special Award in the Grand Finals for his innovation "Beyond Cancer Unemployment".

He won the awards at the recent 2016 International Invention Innovation Competition in Canada.

He and teammates Hong Siaw Swin and Prof S. Shamala saw many

cancer patients were distressed when they lost their jobs and unable to pay for their family expenses.

"One of them cried, saying he had no money to take care of his children," related Dr Sri Ganesh, the team leader.

He said cancer treatment would take six to eight months and employers were not willing to give them long medical leave.

Dr Sri Ganesh said Stage One and Two cancer patients who had recovered could go back to work and be self-dependent.

"But they have difficulty getting jobs because employers tend to think they cannot work anymore."

He said the online job portal, to be launched by year's end, would enable cancer survivors to put up their curriculum vitae online for

potential employers.

Dr Sri Ganesh, who deals with cancer epidemiology and monitors the prevalence of cancer, said there was still no data in the country to show the total number of cancer patients who lost their jobs.

Worldwide, cancer affects the jobs of 24% or eight million out of 33 million cancer survivors who are in the productive ages of 24 to 60.