

**KERATAN AKHBAR-AKHBAR TEMPATAN**  
**TARIKH: 13 MEI 2014 (SELASA)**

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**KERATAN AKHBAR**  
**UTUSAN MALAYSIA (DALAM NEGERI) : MUKA SURAT 20**  
**TARIKH: 13 MEI 2014 (SELASA)**

**PENYELIDIK TEMPATAN PERLU LEBIH GIAT**  
**DALAM R&D TEKNOLOGI, PRODUK BAHARU**



**ABU BAKAR**

KUALA LUMPUR 12 Mei - Para penyelidik tempatan digesa menggiatkan diri secara aktif dengan melakukan lebih banyak penyelidikan dan pembangunan (R&D) terhadap teknologi dan produk-produk baharu.

Timbalan Menteri Sains, Teknologi dan Inovasi, Datuk Dr. Abu Bakar Mohd. Diah berkata, langkah itu amat penting dan perlu dilakukan secara menyeluruh bagi memacu ekonomi nega-

ra ke satu tahap yang lebih kukuh dan berdaya saing tinggi.

"Saya menggesa para penyelidik meneruskan tugas mereka dengan menghasilkan pelbagai penemuan baharu yang mampu memberi impak dan manfaat kepada masyarakat dan negara.

"Malah pihak kami juga akan terus berusaha membantu penyelidik bagi melaksanakan agenda utama dalam memastikan produk yang ber-

potensi dapat diketengahkan untuk dikomersialkan," katanya dalam sidang akhbar selepas merasmikan Simposium Malaysia-Indonesia Geopolimer (MIGS 2014) di sini hari ini.

Kira-kira 70 peserta dari beberapa universiti tempatan antaranya Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP), Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) dan Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) serta dari luar negara me-

nyertai simposium berkenaan.

Abu Bakar berkata, pelbagai program juga perlu diperbanyakan bagi menyahut hasrat dan matlamat meningkatkan budaya penyelidikan dalam kalangan generasi muda.

"Antaranya penganjuran simposium ini bersama Indonesia dalam penyelidikan khususnya polimer yang dilihat dapat melahirkan lebih ramai pakar dalam bidang tersebut

yang mampu bekerjasama serta berkongsi idea," katanya.

Sementara itu Naib Canselor UniMAP, Datuk Dr. Kamarudin Hussin berkata, pihaknya menerusi Pusat Kecemerlangan Geopolimer dan Teknologi Hijau (CeGeogTech) dan beberapa universiti lain telah menubuhkan Persatuan Geopolimer Malaysia (MyGeopolimer) dan Abu Bakar telah dilantik sebagai penasihat persatuan berkenaan.

KERATAN AKHBAR  
THE STAR (NATION) : MUKA SURAT 12  
TARIKH: 13 MEI 2014 (SELASA)

## Govt planning ahead for El Nino

Possible halt of fish export and adjustment on start of padi season in view of dry spell

By **ZUHRIN AZAM AHMAD**  
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**PUTRAJAYA:** The Government is considering the possibility of stopping fish export and adjusting the start of the padi season in view of the expected prolonged dry spell caused by the El Nino.

Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said with the padi planting process usually taking place

in June, a decision whether to delay it would have to be made soon.

"We have asked the Farmers' Association Board to convene a meeting to look into this. We are not too worried about areas under Kada (Kemubu Agricultural Development Authority) and Mada (Muda Agricultural Development Authority) as both have enough irrigation.

"It is the other areas that require water to be channelled in from elsewhere that we need to have a pre-emptive measure to ensure the

farmers would not be badly affected," he said at a press conference yesterday.

Ismail Sabri earlier chaired a special meeting with the ministry's various agencies on plans to face the effects caused by the El Nino weather pattern. While the prolonged dry spell would not adversely affect fish supply, Ismail Sabri said the ministry would consider the possibility of halting fish export as a pre-emptive measure.

The El Nino weather pattern is

predicted to hit Malaysia next month and is expected to bring about a prolonged dry spell.

Meteorological Department central forecasting office director Muhammad Helmi Abdullah said the impending El Nino episode could be an intense one.

He said computer models from institutions around the world, including the United States, Britain, Australia and Japan, had run simulations on the possibility of an El Nino weather pattern this year and the

result was 70% positive.

"The official forecast by the World Meteorological Organisation is that El Nino will begin in June to August and will persist to the following year and we concur.

"During the early stages of El Nino, there will not be much bearing on the weather as the impact will only be felt months later," Muhammad Helmi said, adding that the 1997 El Nino led to a reduction in rainfall that was more profound only in 1998.



**KERATAN AKHBAR**  
**THE STAR (NEWS) : MUKA SURAT 07**  
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## E&E sector aims to enhance global competitiveness of SMEs

**PETALING JAYA:** The electrical and electronics (E&E) National Key Economic Area (NKEA) intends to enhance the global competitiveness of Malaysian small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by offering capacity and capability-building initiatives.

These initiatives include those undertaken through the Malaysian Light Emitting Diode (LED) Consortium, which now comprises 10 high-potential LED/SSL (solid-state lighting) companies, the Economic Transformation Programme 2013 annual report stated.

Under the consortium, participating companies are offered matching grants for the acquisition of machinery and international certifica-

tion to help boost companies' capacity and productivity to meet domestic and international demand.

It also speeds up international market access by ensuring that products meet global standards for quality.

The consortium also facilitates bank financing for companies and organises trade missions to targeted international markets besides undertaking fast-track programmes to support consortium members in internationalising and commercialising their products.

Department of Standards Malaysia director-general Fadilah Baharin said in the report that her priority in the past few years had been shift-

ing the mindset of Malaysian SMEs to prioritise quality.

She said efforts to get manufacturers to meet stringent LED standards had been successful, looking at the decline in product rejection rates.

"I told them they need to invest," said Fadilah. "The bottomline will come later. I am happy to see that the message is now sticking in their mind. It's the culture that they need to inculcate - quality. So, they saw that they needed to invest and have a quality culture so that their products do not get rejected. And indeed, today, I don't hear of any more rejects."

Other entry point projects (EPPs) highlighted

in the industry's NKEA include increasing the number of silicon, cell and wafer producers, developing LED front-end operations as well as enhancing industries through nanotechnology.

The report said the latter EPP would contribute RM3.6bil in gross national income (GNI), creating 24,000 jobs with a potential private investment of RM117mil.

It said Agensi Inovasi Malaysia would undertake a study on graphene and its application in the E&E industry to see to the implementation of nanotechnology projects.

By 2020, the new initiatives are expected to contribute a total GNI of RM9.7bil and create 56,800 high-income jobs.

**BERITA ONLINE  
BERNAMA.COM  
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## **Study: Antarctica 'Stealing' Australia's Rain**

CANBERRA, May 12 (Bernama) -- Antarctica is "stealing" Australia's rainfall which explains why the former is not warming as much as other continents and why southern Australia is recording more droughts, the Australian National University (ANU) said Monday.

Australian researchers have found rising levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are strengthening the stormy Southern Ocean winds and these would normally deliver rain to southern Australia but are instead pushing further south towards Antarctica.

"With greenhouse warming, Antarctica is actually stealing more of Australia's rainfall," Xinhua news agency quotes lead researcher Dr Nerilie Abram from the ANU Research School of Earth Sciences as saying.

"As the westerly winds are getting tighter they're actually trapping more of the cold air over Antarctica. As greenhouse gases continue to rise we'll get fewer storms chased up into Australia," she said.

Until this study, published in Nature Climate Change, Antarctic climate observations were available only from the middle of last century.

But by analysing ice cores from Antarctica and data from tree rings and lakes in South America, Dr Abram and her colleagues were able to extend the history of the westerly winds over the past millennium.

"The Southern Ocean winds are now stronger than at any other time in the last 1,000 years," she said.

"The strengthening of these winds has been particularly prominent over the past 70 years, and by combining our observations with climate models we can clearly link this to rising greenhouse gas levels."

Antarctica had bucked the trend, Abram said, with every other continent warming and the Arctic warming the fastest of anywhere on earth.

The study findings come on the back of a Bureau of Meteorology assessment that Australia remains on course for its first El Nino effect in more than four years.

These weather events typically bring a drier winter and spring to southern Australia and active bushfire seasons in the summer.

The Bureau of Meteorology said the effect is caused by warm sub-seawater temperatures as much as 6 degrees Celsius above normal, spreading eastwards in the tropical Pacific and heralding the formation of an El Nino.

-- BERNAMA