KERATAN AKHBAR-AKHBAR TEMPATAN
TARIKH: 16 FEBRUARI 2017 (KHAMIS)

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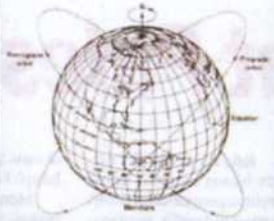
KERATAN AKHBAR
SINAR HARIAN (NASIONAL) : MUKA SURAT 15
TARIKH : 16 FEBRUARI 2017 (KHAMIS)

SUSULAN SOROT


Bumi bentuk cakera leper.




Gambar imej satelit Deep Space Climate Observatory, Julai 2015.


Gambar bumi diambil dari Apollo ke-8, 1968.

PLANETARIUM NEGARA SANGKAL BUMI LEPER

Planetarium Negara tampil menyanggah teori kumpulan pemikir yang mempercayai bumi berbentuk rata seperti cakera leper yang dikenali sebagai teori bumi rata.

Ketua Penolong Pengarah Planetarium Negara, Mohd Zamri Shah Mastor berkata, teori bumi rata juga telah menimbulkan persoalan berkaitan dengan kawalan beribu-ribu satelit di angkasa lepas yang kini sedang berada di orbit.

"Bagaimanakah satelit-satelit tersebut dapat dikawal dengan menggunakan teori bumi rata sedangkan satelit-satelit tersebut yang merupakan aset bernilai berbilion-bilion ringgit sedang dikawal, dijejak dan diselenggara menggunakan teori yang berasaskan bumi sebagai sebuah sfera.

"Berdasarkan hujah-hujah yang dikemukakan pemikir teori alternatif ini, Planetarium Negara menyangkal Teori Bumi Rata yang menyatakan bahawa bumi adalah berbentuk rata atau berbentuk cakera leper, bukannya berbentuk sfera," katanya kepada *Sinar Harian*.

Mohd Zamri Shah mengemukakan bukti pada tahun 1968, seorang angkasawan dari misi Apollo ke-8 bernama Christmas Eve telah mengambil gambar bumi semasa kapal angkasanya berdekatan dengan bulan. Gambar tersebut telah membuktikan dengan jelas bahawa bumi adalah berbentuk sfera.

Selain itu, menurutnya, pada 6 Julai 2015, satelit Deep Space Climate Observatory telah mengambil gambar penuh permukaan bumi dari jarak 1.6 juta kilometer (km) dari bumi. Gambar tersebut telah dengan jelas menunjukkan bahawa bumi berbentuk sfera dan kutub utara bumi pula tidak berkedudukan di pusat bumi.

Katanya, penyokong bumi rata mendakwa bahawa bumi berpusat di kutub utara manakala kutub selatan bumi merupakan tembok ais yang berada di sekeliling pinggir cakera dan tidak pernah di lepasi oleh sesiapa.

Beliau berkata, persatuan ini telah diasaskan oleh seorang yang berbangsa Inggeris, Samuel Shenton, pada tahun 1956.

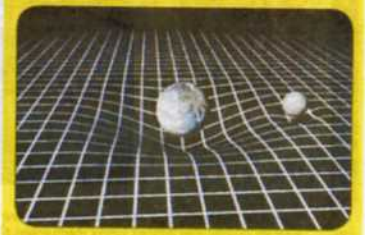
"Mereka percaya bahawa bumi berbentuk rata, bukannya berbentuk sfera berdasarkan hipotesis yang telah dikemukakan oleh Samuel Rowbotham pada tahun 1849. Sehingga Julai 2014 persatuan tersebut telah mempunyai keahlian lebih daripada 500 orang dan terkini mempunyai penyokong lebih daripada 2 juta orang di seluruh dunia.

"Persatuan ini menentang idea-idea sains angkasa moden terutamanya terhadap NASA dengan menanam kepercayaan bahawa bumi bukannya berbentuk sfera tetapi berbentuk cakera leper ataupun berbentuk rata.

"Akhir-akhir ini idea teori bumi rata telah menjadi tular dan menjadi perdebatan hangat di kalangan pengguna media sosial di seluruh dunia termasuk juga di Malaysia.

INFO

GOLONGAN bumi rata mempercayai matahari hanyalah sejauh 4,800 km dari bumi dan bukannya 149 juta km seperti yang diterima seluruh dunia hari ini. Mereka juga mempercayai matahari hanyalah berdiameter 51 km.



TAHUKAH anda berat adalah ukuran apabila jisim badan kita ditarik oleh daya graviti. Di setiap planet, kita akan mempunyai timbangan yang berbeza-beza. Ini menunjukkan bahawa setiap planet mempunyai tarikan graviti yang berbeza. Semakin ringan badan kita, maka semakin rendah tarikan graviti. Contohnya di Marikh, gravity planet tersebut hanyalah 0.38 daripada kekuatan graviti bumi.

KERATAN AKHBAR
THE SUN (NEWS WITHOUT BORDER) : MUKA SURAT 2
TARIKH : 16 FEBRUARI 2017 (KHAMIS)

■ ASSASSINATION AT KLIA2

Embassy officials at morgue

> International news crew gather at hospital area where body was sent for autopsy

REPORTS BY *TIMOTHY ACHARIAM, AMAR SHAH MOHSEN* AND *G. SURACH*
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KUALA LUMPUR: The area around the Kuala Lumpur Hospital (HKL) mortuary was a hive of activity yesterday as news crew from all over the world converged there for the latest updates on the death of a North Korean citizen, believed to be Kim Jong-Nam, the half-brother the country's supreme leader Kim Jong-Un.

North Korean embassy officials were seen at about 2.15pm accompanying the ambassador to Malaysia, Kang Chol, as he entered the mortuary where the body was sent for an autopsy.

They were prepared to claim the body but were told by police they could only do so after a thorough clinical examination is carried out by pathologists.

It is learnt that blood and skin samples of the victim were collected and will be sent to the Chemistry Department for a toxicology test to determine if a lethal substance had caused his death.

Police presence at the mortuary was heavy throughout the day as several cars from the embassy with diplomatic number plates were seen entering the area.

Journalists tried to approach the officials alighting from the cars but were stopped by auxiliary policemen guarding the entrances.

Earlier, City police chief Commissioner Datuk Amar Singh was seen leaving the mortuary at 11am, about an hour after the body had arrived from the Putrajaya General Hospital under heavy police escort.

The preliminary post-mortem report had not been released at press time.

ADIB RAWI/THESUN

North Korean embassy officials waiting at the mortuary yesterday.

KERATAN AKHBAR
THE STAR (NATION) : MUKA SURAT 22
TARIKH: 16 FEBRUARI 2017 (KHAMIS)

Weather extremes ahead, says dept

Hotter days and thunderstorms predicted

PETALING JAYA: Malaysians must brace for weather extremes in the next few months – it's going to be hotter than usual and there will be thunderstorms in the afternoons.

The Malaysian Meteorological Department (MetMalaysia) said the downpours should help cool things down a bit.

However, that's not good news for many commuters who know that the rain always means traffic snarls and travel delays, especially if it comes down during rush hour.

A MetMalaysia spokesman said Malaysians needn't fear a heatwave like that in some parts of Australia now.

The extremely hot summer in that country has seen forest fires and power outages as a result.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Climatology and Oceanography specialist Prof Fredolin Tangang explained that the weather systems in Australia and Malaysia were different.

"No need to worry," he added.

According to MetMalaysia, the sun will move from south to north next month, passing over the equator, and will bring more heat to this region.

Malaysia will be closer to the sun in that period but the inter-monsoon period arrives in April bringing thunderstorms and downpours, said the spokesman.

Prof Fredolin said there would be increased solar radiation when the sun is directly above the equator in mid-March, but how hot the days will be depends on weather conditions.

"Cloudy skies or overcast conditions will keep much of the solar radiation from the ground," he said.

Meanwhile, vegetable farmers will start planting several types of seasonal crops to take advantage of the warmer weather.

Cameron Highlands Vegetable Growers Association secretary-general Chay Ee Mong said production was slow during the wet season and farmers had to opt for rooftop farming to meet demand.

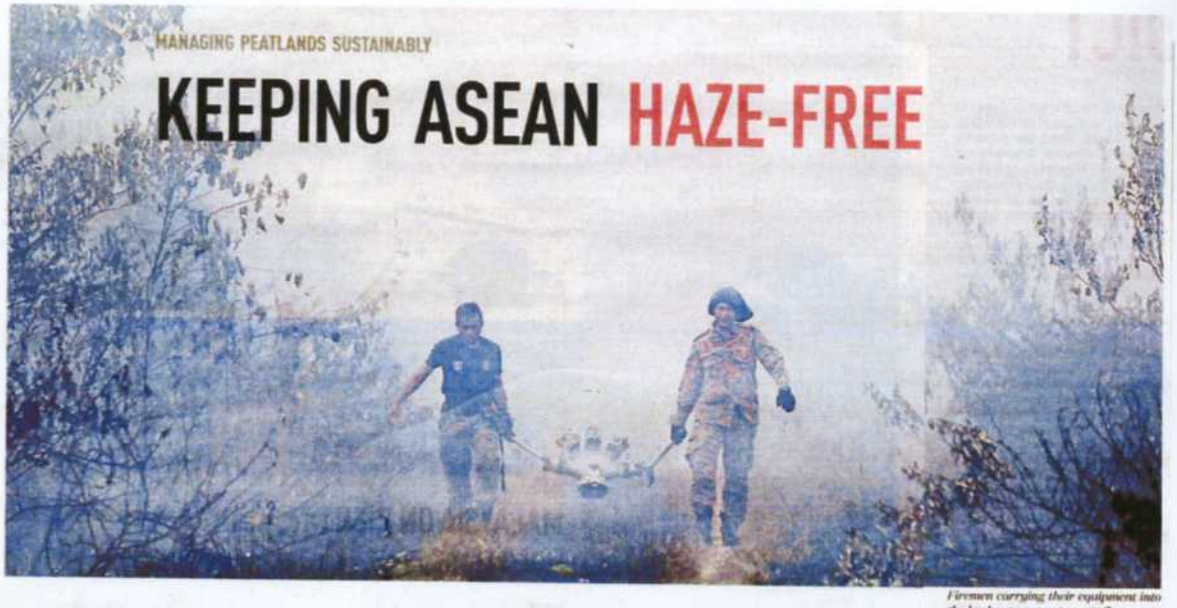
With warm weather expected, they will take the opportunity to boost supplies of cabbage, tomato and green beans.

KERATAN AKHBAR
NEW STRAITS TIMES (OPINION) : MUKA SURAT 18
TARIKH : 16 FEBRUARI 2017 (KHAMIS)

ZAKRI ABDUL HAMID

MANAGING PEATLANDS SUSTAINABLY

KEEPING ASEAN HAZE-FREE



Firemen carrying their equipment into the bushes to put out a peat fire near a highway in Sepang in 2014. PIC BY AHMAD IRHAM MOHD NOOR

Members must strengthen science-policy interface on environmental issues to translate targets into actions

THE great peatlands of Southeast Asia are incalculably valuable, both within the region and to all humanity.

Not only are they highly biodiverse, they play a crucial role in world climate regulation, storing an estimated 120 billion tonnes of carbon — roughly five per cent of all the carbon in Earth's near-surface.

Covering about eight per cent of Malaysia, peatlands have enormous local economic, ecological and hydrological value as well, providing timber and non timber forest products, regulating and purifying water supplies, controlling floods and offering many other benefits on which our well being depends.

In efforts to improve socio-economic conditions, Malaysia and many other neighbours have converted peatlands and other types of forest to plantations, sometimes burning biomass to clear or prepare the land.

Alarmingly, these fires now cause up to 90 per cent of the haze that plagues health at a regional level, releasing three to six times more unhealthy airborne particulate matter than fires on other types of soil.

Since the early 1980s, haze has reached menacing levels many times, the 1997 episode remembered as one of the worst ever, prolonged by dry weather and aggravated by emissions from vehicles, industries and the open burning of waste.

A 10-day emergency was declared in Sarawak when the Air Pollutant Index topped 500 — far exceeding the "unhealthy" threshold (101 to 200 range), and well beyond even the "hazardous" 300 breakpoint.

The three-month episode of 1997 caused huge direct regional economic losses, conservatively estimated at US$9 billion (RM28bil billion). And, the cost to human health and biodiversity, if they could be quantified, would likely represent even more staggering sums.

In response, Malaysia introduced many local reforms, including regulatory measures to prevent open burning, with high penalties for non-compliance. The 1997 haze also served as a wake-up call for the region, with countries teaming up through Asean to create an Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution, adopted in 2002, and since ratified by 10 countries, most recently Indonesia in January 2015.

Parties to the agreement meet at least once a year. A Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control was created, with an associated fund to facilitate rapid action during episodes.

Based in Singapore, an Asean Specialised Meteorological Centre supports tracking of hotspots and haze movements, and monitor regional weather. A region-wide Fire Danger Rating System helps guide and monitor atmospheric and ground conditions.

Asean's Peatland Management Strategy to 2020 was translated by Malaysia into a National Action Plan on Peatlands, launched on the United Nation's International Day for Biodiversity, 2011. And, I laud these major strides and success stories.

However, the region continues to endure serious haze episodes, the latest lasting from June to October 2015. Reports suggest that the 2015 haze cost Indonesia alone around US$16 billion in losses — double the damage and losses inflicted by the 2004 tsunami.

As the science adviser to the prime minister, as well as chair of the National Professors Council (MPN), I have given the haze issue a lot of attention.

Last year, the Haze Task Force of the Academy of Sciences Malaysia outlined several recommendations in a paper that also incorporated the outcomes of a meeting between the MPN and Indonesian academicians, held in Pekanbaru in November 2015.

The recommendations include:

Rather than burning the biomass cleared during replanting and land preparation operations, industry and researchers should cooperate to find productive ways to use it, supplementing farmers' incomes in the process.

The Asean peatland management strategy should be translated into national plans and implemented with a complementary resource mobilisation plan. Simply put, a good plan without resources will not work;

The destruction of biodiversity, the production of haze and related environment problems are both a security and environmental issue. Enforcement of all domestic laws and regulations to control fires must be strictly enforced, with courts taking a no-compromise position in sentencing to deter offences;

Enhanced collaborative research and development is needed covering all aspects of the haze issue — from soil science, ecology, atmospheric science, climate change to alternative biomass uses. We need to better understand the effects of haze on human, animal and plant health and diversity, as well as its socioeconomic impact; and,

Improving communication, education and public awareness can bring about the bi/attitude change needed for people to act responsibly and live in harmony with nature, and to facilitate both top-down and bottom-up actions, translating polices and laws into action.

I encourage non-governmental organisations and industry leaders to assist governments in these efforts.

Consumers, meanwhile, have started using their purchasing power and voices to demand that all companies act responsibly to avoid haze episodes.

I also urge governments in this region to strengthen the science-policy interface on peatland management, as well as on wider biodiversity issues. Globally, we have established the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which I had the privilege to serve as the founding chairman.

As a biodiversity hotspot, Asean nations need to effectively implement the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. This requires more science-policy interactions at national levels.

Finally, I would like to suggest that a round table dialogue be established at national levels involving all sectors — government, NGOs, private sector, indigenous and local communities, farmers and scientists — to openly discuss this issue and serve as a participatory and inclusive platform to strengthen governance and mitigation of the problem.

We need profound transformations. But creating an Asean that is free from haze can be achieved if we all work together.

We need profound transformations. But creating an Asean that is free from haze can be achieved if we all work together.

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The writer is science adviser to the prime minister and chairman of the National Professors Council. This is an excerpt of a keynote address at the Regional Peatland Governance Workshop in Putrajaya on Feb 13