msn lifestyle

Dr Adham Baba: Govt allocates RM1.05 million for 20-second COVID-19 test developed by UTM
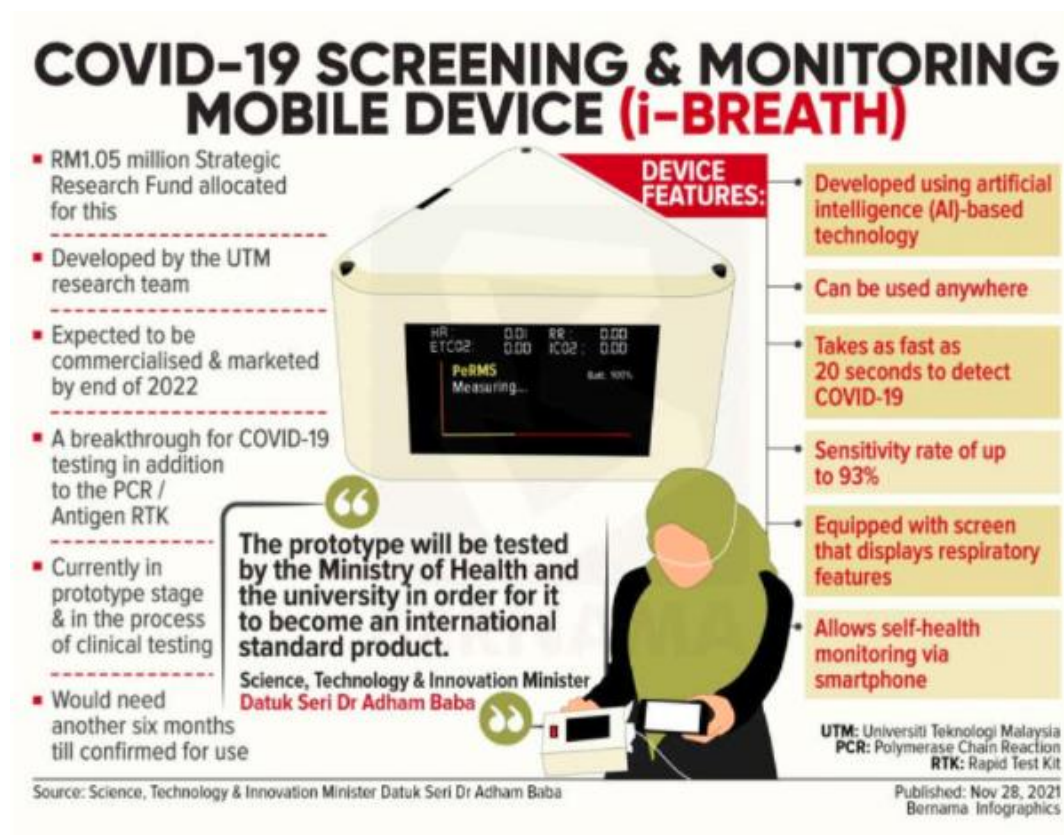
Dzamira Dzafri   12 hrs ago

👍 Like   💬 Comments   ❤️ 1

Start the conversation 💬

The Science, Technology, and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Adham Baba said that the Malaysian government has allocated RM1.05 million under the Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation's (MOSTI) Strategic Research Fund (SRF) for the development of a 20-second COVID-19 Screening and Monitoring Mobile Device called i-Breath. Developed by Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) research team, the test is expected to be commercialised and marketed by the end of next year.

What is i-Breath?

COVID-19 SCREENING & MONITORING MOBILE DEVICE (i-BREATH)

- RM1.05 million Strategic Research Fund allocated for this

- Developed by the UTM research team

- Expected to be commercialised & marketed by end of 2022

- A breakthrough for COVID-19 testing in addition to the PCR / Antigen RTK

- Currently in prototype stage & in the process of clinical testing

- Would need another six months till confirmed for use

DEVICE FEATURES:

- Developed using artificial intelligence (AI)-based technology
- Can be used anywhere
- Takes as fast as 20 seconds to detect COVID-19
- Sensitivity rate of up to 93%
- Equipped with screen that displays respiratory features
- Allows self-health monitoring via smartphone

"The prototype will be tested by the Ministry of Health and the university in order for it to become an international standard product."

Science, Technology & Innovation Minister **Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba**

UTM: Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
PCR: Polymerase Chain Reaction
RTK: Rapid Test Kit

Source: Science, Technology & Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba

Published: Nov 28, 2021
Bernama Infographics

According to the picture shared by UTM, the i-Breath device lets users breathe through a tube through their nose—and very unlike a breathalyser, which is a device that you blow through your mouth to test alcohol levels. The i-Breathe is also equipped

with a screen that displays respiratory features and allows self-health monitoring via a smartphone.

"i-Breath is developed using advanced technology based on artificial intelligence (AI) and can be used anywhere. It takes as fast as 20 seconds to detect the presence of COVID-19 and the sensitivity of this device is up to 93%," said Dr. Adham Baba.

According to Dr. Adham, the i-Breath device is currently at the prototype stage but is in the process of clinical testing. It would need another six months to be confirmed.

He also said that it was a "breakthrough for COVID-19 testing" in addition to the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) or Antigen Rapid Test Kit (RTK) that is currently being used. So far, it looks like it would be the quickest solution to COVID-19 testing as the at-home test kits would take about 15 minutes or more to conduct.

After successful testing, the prototype will be tested by the Health Ministry and UTM in order for it to become "an international standard product". Dr. Adham added that during a clinical study, the i-Breathe device has up to a "93% sensitivity level" and can generate results in a short amount of time.

Last year, a startup in Singapore also announced that they were testing a similar COVID-19 breathalyzer test which was able to achieve at least 90% accuracy after screening participants on-site for 60 seconds. But there's no information on how it's going currently.

Earlier this month, Dr. Adham Baba also said that they were in the midst of introducing a mobile phone application that detects COVID-19 through users' cough sound patterns. Users would only need to download the application and "record the sound of 'coughing' three times in a row".