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MOSTI identifies 46 technology solutions to address food security

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PUTRAJAYA (June 10): A total of 46 technological solutions have been identified ready to help handle food security issues, said Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba.

"MOSTI (Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation) is offering a list of technology inventories under MOSTI that can be used immediately," he said in a statement on Friday.

He said the expertise of more than 800 scientists from the Academy of Sciences, Malaysia could also be utilised to identify and match the best technology-based solutions.

To improve crop productivity, one of the technologies that can be used is gamma irradiation to generate new crop varieties, including crop improvement, he said.

The use of fertilisers based on nanotechnology (nanofertilisers) will also allow the release of nutrients in a controlled manner, thereby reducing the use of fertilisers and increasing productivity and agricultural products, especially food supply, he said.

Dr Adham said MOSTI and its agencies are actively conducting research and development (R&D) to help address food security issues with technology-based solutions.

The Malaysian Nuclear Agency, among others, is conducting R&D on grass mutation breeding methods, for example the production of new varieties of Napier grass with higher protein content as the main food of livestock such as cattle and goats, he said.

Apart from R&D activities, Dr Adham said MOSTI had also set up a Technology Solutions Operations Room recently as a proactive measure in addressing food security issues in the country.

"Through this operations room, the supply chain in the ecosystem will be connected between key players such as entrepreneurs, industry and academics to help address current issues in the country immediately," he said.

Meanwhile, MOSTI secretary-general Datuk Zainal Abidin Abu Hassan said the operations room had also identified the use of artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), biotechnology and nanotechnology to resolve food security issues in the short, medium and long term.

He said MOSTI would hold engagement sessions with breeders' associations and farmers as well as technology companies to gather input to help address food security issues.