



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

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#### **BIOTECHNOLOGY TO SPUR TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT TO OVERCOME FOOD SECURITY ISSUES**

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**PUTRAJAYA, November 8, 2023** – YB Tuan Chang Lih Kang, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) has officially launched the National Biotechnology Symposium 2023, themed "Catalyzing Biotechnology for Food Security."

The event unfolded at the Marriott Hotel, Putrajaya, organized by the National Institutes of Biotechnology Malaysia (NIBM), in collaboration with esteemed partners, including Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), Malaysian Agricultural Research & Development Institute (MARDI), Bioeconomy Corporation (BEC), UCSI University, Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM), and SIRIM Berhad.

Bringing together scientists, researchers, students, industry players, and other stakeholders committed to the study of biotechnology and food security, the two-day symposium attracted professionals from universities, agencies, and industries worldwide, including participants from Cambodia, the Philippines, and Singapore.

In his inaugural address, YB Tuan Chang Lih Kang underscored the imperative of addressing global food security challenges, aligning with the principles of the National Biotechnology Policy 2.0 (NBP 2.0). The escalating global population and intensifying pressures on agriculture due to climate change and resource limitations thus make food security an urgent concern. This concern has spurred a substantial demand for biotechnology to provide innovative solutions, enhancing crop yields, bolstering crop resilience, reducing post-harvest losses, improving soil quality, and more. Biotechnology's significance to the global economy is also well placed to reach around USD3.44 trillion of revenue by 2030.

Concurrently, YB Tuan Chang Lih Kang also launched BioAlliance, a collaborative network formed among researchers, developers, practitioners, industries and users of bio-based technologies. It is founded on shared interests, characteristics, and common objectives. BioAlliance fosters connections transcending geographical boundaries to achieve mutual goals and benefits. BioAlliance is currently focusing on specific areas such as Future Food, MyGenom, MyNature, Human Vaccine, Bioethics, and Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), a non-exhaustive list, at the initial stage.

During the symposium, an exchange of Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) took place between NIBM and several institutions and companies. These included Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Manipal International University, UCSI University, GK Aqua Sdn. Bhd., AGTC Genomics, iHealth Lifesciences Sdn. Bhd., Malaysian Pepper Board, and Halagel (M) Sdn. Bhd. These MoUs, facilitated various activities and collaborative efforts, such as joint grant applications, research publications, conference organization, technical service collaboration, and technology transfer.

In alignment with the objectives of the NBP 2.0, the National Biotechnology Symposium 2023 aims to establish an expanded platform for scientists, students, and industry collaborators to exchange insights and enthusiasm in tackling food security challenges through biotechnology. The aspiration is to transform Malaysia into a cutting-edge bio-innovation nation marked by progress, prosperity, inclusivity, and sustainability through the collective cooperation of all stakeholders.

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Prepared by

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