A person wearing a bright red protective suit and a dark cap is standing in a residential area, using a fogging machine to spray a white mist. The mist is concentrated around a house with a dark tiled roof. The background shows a hazy, overcast sky. In the bottom right corner, there is a stylized illustration of a human hand in a reddish-brown tone, with a mosquito perched on the index finger. The mosquito is detailed with its wings, legs, and proboscis.

Local councils in Selangor have started fogging in dengue cluster neighbourhoods to kill *Aedes* mosquitoes.

Health teams roll up sleeves

Local councils carry out checks as dengue figures rise in Selangor

THE Selangor government wants local authorities to ensure residents maintain cleanliness within their premises.

This includes spending 10 minutes a week to destroy potential mosquito breeding sites.

State public health, unity, women and family committee chairman Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud told *StarMetro* that for non-dengue cluster areas, the most effective way to keep the mosquito population down was through source reduction.

This could be done through detecting and destroying mosquito breeding sites as eradicating larvae would kill off the mosquito at the weakest stage of its life cycle.

"We want all local authorities to encourage households to do their part by removing stagnant water from potential breeding sites.

"The Selangor Health Department is stressing *Aedes* source reduction as the primary focus of its vector control efforts," she said.

Dr Siti Mariah added that all households must set aside 10 minutes a week to check their compounds and inside their homes for potential mosquito breeding sites.

This is in line with the World Health Organisation's (WHO) recommendations for vector control.

"In the past, council health inspectors even checked toilet cisterns and toothbrush holders.

"Now the team will also check water dispenser trays, the car porch, garden and even back lanes.

"Many people now plant stuff in containers but these might hold rainwater which is ideal for *Aedes* mosquitoes to breed," she said.

As at Nov 27, Selangor recorded 32,646 confirmed dengue cases in the 47th epidemiology week.

It is a 132.6% (18,610) increase compared to the corresponding period last year where 14,036 cases were recorded.

Four districts that recorded the highest number of cases were Petaling with 11,201, Hulu Langat (7,647), Klang (5,503) and Gombak (4,440).

Other districts were Sepang

Dengue alert

Make sure there are no *Aedes* breeding grounds in your homes and surrounding areas



Rain gutter

Make sure gutters are not clogged. Repair and replace when rusty.



Tyre/can/bottle

Keep dry and add larvicide.



Toilet

Add larvicide to cistern.



Pail

Scrub and wash every week and cover. When not in use, turn upside down.



Potted plant/vase

Ensure plates below are dry. For vases, scrub and wash every week.



Dish rack

Dispose of accumulated water in the tray.



Refrigerator's under tray

Scrub and wash every week. Add larvicide.

TheStar graphics



Azmi (left) with MPK Environmental Health officer Zakaria Ismail elaborating on the Koba-10 initiative to spend 10 minutes weekly to check their homes and surroundings for *Aedes* larvae.

(1,366) Kuala Langat (1,088), Kuala Selangor (709), Hulu Selangor (621) and Sabak Bernam (71).

Eight deaths were recorded in Selangor due to dengue complica-

tions this year – four in Hulu Langat, two in Petaling and one case each in Hulu Selangor and Kuala Langat.

Dr Siti Mariah reminded



Dr Siti Mariah: Source reduction is the most effective method to keep the mosquito population down.



Dr Chitra Davi: Residents should become active participants in the fight against *Aedes* mosquitoes.

Selangor residents to be vigilant about the danger posed due to current weather patterns of rainfall combined with warm weather, which was one of the main drivers of dengue transmission.

Dr Siti Mariah added that health inspectors had stepped up efforts at hotspots in Petaling, Hulu Langat, Klang and Gombak districts.

"It is important to focus our efforts in these hotspots given the intensity and number of dengue cases," she said.

An area is classified a hotspot if



Klang Municipal Council personnel checking a back lane for Aedes larvae.

new cases are found in a 30-day period.

Called "mopping up", local council health inspectors will check homes to identify and destroy mosquito breeding areas to contain the spread of dengue.

Petaling Jaya City Council's (MBPJ) Health and Environment Department director Dr Chitra Davi N. Vadivellu said it continued to engage with Petaling Jaya residents to promote the Search and Destroy Aedes Rangers (Sedar) public awareness campaign.

"Our aim is to build an under-

standing with those living in landed properties, high-rises and even industrial areas to become active participants in the fight against Aedes mosquito.

"We want residents to inspect their properties and remove sources of stagnant water," she said adding that the emphasis was on source reduction of Aedes mosquito.

"We advise residents to invert pails, clean up potted plant plates, change water in vases, sweep their garden of dried leaves and discard unwanted containers that could collect rainwater.

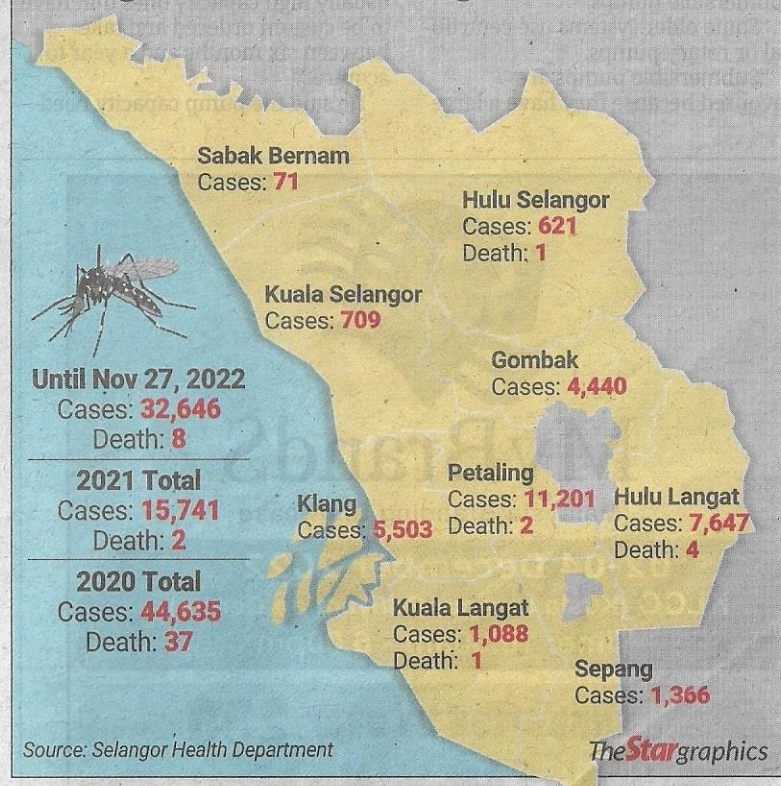
"These are simple steps that we can take daily to prevent mosquitoes from establishing a foothold in our homes," she said.

Klang Municipal Council (MPK) Health and Environment Department director Azmi Muji said the Community Free of Aedes, 10 Minutes (Koba-10) initiative was being practised where residents were encouraged to spend 10 minutes a week to clean up their surroundings.

"Koba-10 is a community-based approach to reduce dengue cases in residential areas.

"It is crucial to have community

Dengue cases in Selangor



Source: Selangor Health Department

TheStargraphics

support to stop the chain of dengue transmission," he said.

Azmi added that WHO had endorsed the source reduction approach, which encompassed preventive methods, public education and community involvement.

"Concerted efforts can reduce the number of breeding grounds," he said, adding that outdoor fogging was being carried out at dengue cluster areas.

"Fogging is carried out in the early morning or late afternoon when Aedes mosquitoes are known to be most active.

"We do it at these times as the

temperature allows the fog to stay at ground level longer, optimising the contact of insecticide with mosquitoes," he said.

Azmi added that source reduction was still preferred over fogging as it was a more effective and sustainable strategy.

Aedes mosquitoes thrive in clean stagnant water either inside or outside premises, he said.

Among the symptoms of dengue fever are high fever, headache, body ache (both muscle and bone), weakness, vomiting, sore throat, altered taste sensation and rash.