

USM bags 19 ITEX awards

> Asthma treatment, special foam among winning inventions

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GEORGE TOWN: A new treatment to manage asthma helped Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) bag one of its 19 gold awards, won during the recently concluded Invention, Innovation and Technology Exhibition (ITEX).

Dr Nurul Asma Abdullah of the School of Dental Sciences at USM said the treatment, called "BreatheEzi", is aimed at managing asthma without the use of chemicals.

She said it took her two years to develop, adding that the main ingredient is sclerotium, which is derived from tiger milk mushrooms.

"This helps in reducing common asthma symptoms and promotes better respiratory health," she said at a press conference yesterday.

Another winning invention was the Eco-

RubFOAM by Prof Dr Hanafi ismail of the School of Materials and Mineral Resources.

The foam is made from rubber waste and can be molded into any shape and size such as mattresses and can also be used as a sound-proofing material.

"The foam is a cost-effective, easy and modern way to reduce sound or noise in many places or situations," he said, adding that the product could help reduce industrial rubber waste.

USM deputy vice-chancellor Prof Dr Muhamad Jantan congratulated all winners and urged them to come up with better products.

He said the university had participated in ITEX since 2006 as it provided a platform for inventions to gain wider recognition, which could lead to commercialisation opportunities.



MASRY CHE ANI/THESUN

Nurul Asma with her gold medal and 'BreatheEzi' product for asthma management.

BRIEFS

MORE ASSETS TO JOIN SEARCH FOR MH370

KUALA LUMPUR: More assets will be deployed as the search for missing flight MH370 in the South Indian Ocean enters a new phase. Acting Transport Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said the tripartite meeting among Malaysia, China and Australia had agreed that specific assets, including commercial assets, would be required for the new phase of the search.

"The procurement process will be done through an open or limited tender process based on Commonwealth standards to facilitate cost effectiveness and best value for money," he told a press conference yesterday.

FIREFLY LAUNCHES TRAVEL PORTAL

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's premium short-haul airline Firefly yesterday officially launched a travel portal called Firefly Holiday, offering convenience from the time of booking to arrival at the preferred destinations. The portal enables customers to customise and select their preferred flight timings and hotels and complement their holidays with optional transfers and tours. The airline will launch two new routes in September this year, connecting Penang with Krabi, and Johor Baru with Ipoh. - Bernama

AVIATION CARNIVAL TAKES OFF NEXT MONTH

PUTRAJAYA: The inaugural Subang International Air Carnival, to be held from June 12-15, will be a platform for the aviation industry to showcase its products and services. "This biennial event is designed to support the government's aspiration to fortify social integration among Malaysians, especially the younger generation," said Deputy Transport Minister Datuk Abdul Aziz Kaprawi after launching the event's official logo yesterday.

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