

# M'sian school bags US\$100,000 in regional health meet

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**NUSA DUA:** SK Putrajaya Presint 11(1) has been named the “healthiest” among more than 2,000 primary and secondary schools across the region to bag the grand prize of US\$100,000 (RM470,746).

The primary school in Putrajaya was crowned champion at the AIA Healthiest Schools (AHS) Regional Awards ceremony on Thursday night in Bali, Indonesia, for its innovative Helpie health mobile application.

The app was designed to improve students’ mental well-being by offering tools for stress identification and management, as well as fun games and health campaigns.

The project yielded impressive results, with over 500 students experiencing a drop in stress levels – from 34% to 18% – while 92% of the students reported better emotional understanding.

Teacher and Helpie project lead Mohd Saharudin Setapa said the award is a recognition of the team’s hard work.

“We will try to sustain this project using the prize money, and hopefully expand it to other countries so that we can encourage better mental health and well-be-



**All smiles:** (From left) AIA Malaysia corporate communications manager Tunku Faradiana Tunku Zainal Abidin, Suzana, Mohd Saharudin, SK Putrajaya Presint 11(1) headmistress Norzah Mohd Kassim, AIA Malaysia brand and communications director Asha Nair and SMK Convent Butterworth principal Lim Lean Yolk at the awards ceremony.

ing in students everywhere.

“Words can’t even describe the happiness I feel right now. I’m so overwhelmed,” he said, adding that though his pupils were not present at the ceremony, they would definitely be overjoyed at the good news.

“I would like to thank the prin-

icipal, parents and students for all their contribution and support for this project,” he said.

A total of 2,376 primary and secondary schools from Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Australia, and Vietnam participated in the 2023/24 AHS programme.

Na Sang Semi-Boarding Primary School for Ethnic Minorities No. 1 and Victory Experimental Secondary School from Vietnam received honourable mentions for their “Happy Schools” and “Going to School is Happiness” initiatives, respectively.

Praising Malaysia’s project as “very impressive”, AIA Group chief marketing officer Stuart A. Spencer said it addressed a crucial issue, as mental health problems have surged in children and adults since the Covid-19 pandemic, yet there was a lack of adequate attention and resources to address them.

“We’re trying to help stimulate a change to encourage more people to reach out for mental health assistance and we think the submission from SK Putrajaya Presint 11(1) in Malaysia was terrific,” he said.

On June 19, during the inaugural AHS national-level competition in Kuala Lumpur, SK Putrajaya Presint 11(1) and SMK Convent Butterworth received US\$13,000 (RM61,213) each for coming out on top in their respective categories of the challenge.

Both schools then went on to represent Malaysia, competing against five other participating countries in Asia-Pacific.

SMK Convent Butterworth senior assistant of student affairs Suzana Khamis, who showcased the school’s Eco-Jump Rope and Dumbbell, said they were proud of their project and happy that they had managed to compete regionally.

The project fosters fitness and sustainability, promoting creativity and teamwork and a greener lifestyle among students.

Endorsed by the Education Ministry, the AHS programme is designed to encourage healthy living habits among students aged five to 16 by promoting healthy eating, active lifestyles, and mental well-being, as well as health and sustainability in schools.

The programme also provides free downloadable resources that will equip teachers to effectively introduce health and well-being concepts into their classrooms.

In his speech, Spencer said the AHS competition aligns closely with their mission to foster impactful, sustainable behaviour change for healthier living.

“We are proud of how the competition is scaling and empowering the next generation to make healthy choices and drive meaningful change in communities across Asia,” he said.