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To Russia with hope

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2007/04/05

KUALA LUMPUR: Are Malaysians flying in droves to Moscow for surgery to enlarge their penises?

A posting on a Malaysian medical blog has created ripples within the medical fraternity by announcing that such surgery has increased the length of a man's penis from two inches to seven inches.

According to "palmdoc" who made the posting on Malaysia Medical Resources, a medical blog, "news of the pioneering surgery on a man born with genitals so small that he was unable to have sex had reached Malaysian shores".

But there is more in the posting to interest Malaysians: Apparently, the operation involved amputating the penis, growing it on the forearm and then returning the enhanced organ to its original place.

"In an 11-hour operation, plastic surgeons in Moscow removed the 28-year-old's undersized penis and stitched it on to his left forearm, where they grafted on additional flesh and tissue taken from his inner arm," he quoted an article in the Telegraph of London as saying.

Palmdoc had said that travel agents were reportedly making brisk sales in tickets to Moscow after Malaysians came to know about the surgery.

But the posting did not explain the sudden interest among Malaysians despite the fact that the operation took place in 2005.

In a later posting, he said that while it could not be confirmed that thousands of Malaysians were travelling to Russia for the surgery, it was true that the 2005 operation had taken place.

While the fact that Malaysians are making their presence felt in Moscow may be open to debate, the operation itself is a fact.

According to the Telegraph, Professor Mikhail Sokolshchik, of the Russian National Medical Surgical Centre, hoped that the patient would eventually be able to have sexual relations and father children.

Nick Holdsworth, its correspondent in Moscow, had written that the patient had paid more than £1,000 (RM6,800) towards the cost of the operation after being warned that the operation was at his own risk.

"The bulk of the cost, however, was borne by the clinic, which hopes to market the procedure to similarly afflicted men around the world."

OTHER STORIES

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In an immediate reaction, Malaysian urologists advised against the operation as the risks far outweighed the gains.

University Malaya Medical Centre Faculty of Medicine Department of Surgery head Prof Dr Azad Hassan A. Razack said only very few Malaysians would need such surgery which was for people born with an abnormally small penis.

He said only one man had the surgery so far with details of the case yet to be published.

"Wait for more cases and longer term results to get full evidence to prove it works," he said.

Dr Azad, a consultant urologist, said some men felt that the penis was small due to something called the "Locker Room Syndrome" where men tended to compare sizes of the penis when undressing to go swimming.

"Men feel their penises are small when they look from the top but in actual fact they are bigger if seen from the side or front.

"That is why they always feel that the other person's is bigger and this makes them feel anxious and inferior.

"Most of the time it is not a problem. As long as they can have a normal sexual life, it is not problem," he added.

Dr Azad advised men who felt their penis was small to seek the advice of their urologist "before undertaking expensive and risky procedures".

Asked on the risk factors, he said, the surgery could cause damage to a normal penis.

"The nerves can be affected especially transferring organs and most of the time they look at the blood vessels. The nerve sensation can decrease. If anything goes wrong, for example the blood vessels, it can result in complications."

He said interruption to the blood flow to the penis due to blood vessel narrowing or other reasons could damage the penis which could result in a person not being able to have sex.

"Worried about your penis size? See a urologist. Most of the time its psychological rather than a physical problem," said Dr Azad who is also the honorary secretary of the Malaysian Urological Association.

He said the issue would be raised in the association's forthcoming meeting.

Dr Azad said such surgery could be performed on a patient who had a damaged penis due to self-mutilation, accidents or cancer.

UMMC Associate Prof Dr Stephen Jambunathan, a consultant psychiatrist, said people undertook such surgeries for various reasons including emphasis on sexual activity and lack of awareness of medical conditions that caused erectile dysfunction.

"They go and do an enlargement for the wrong reasons. People should do so for pure practical needs such as organ abnormality."

He advised Malaysians who wanted to go for such major operations to go for a psychological assessment so that they could be assessed as to whether they were doing it for the right reasons.

The test will also ascertain if they are prepared for the surgery and its consequences.

Dr Jambunathan said people must be made aware of the long-term physical and psychological effects of such operations.

Current rank : **3.6** (5-High 1-Low)

1 2 3 4 5



WEEKEND READ

Focus



**Letter from Australia:
Bitter-sweet win for Labor**

IT was an election win that should not have been, going by people on the street as much as the expert commentators.

Learning Curve



Comment: Autonomy new catchword in education system

IT is very refreshing to see that the word "autonomy" has crept back into the academic world. With cluster schools becoming a reality, education history is being created, with autonomy the mainstay for the successful implementation of the concept.











Sunday Interview



Fantastic-a Antarctica

Three female research officers from the National Antarctic Research Centre based in Universiti Malaya embarked on their maiden journey to Antarctica and came back with tales to awe and inspire.

MY INTEREST

<p>▶ BEAUTY Tried & Tested: Nail it!</p> 	<p>▶ TECH</p>  <p>Thingamajiggy: Little devil</p>	<p>▶ MUSIC/GAMES Cover Story: Fun comes in tiny pieces</p> 	<p>▶ MOVIES/THEATRE Cinema: What That Behind You?</p> 	<p>▶ MOTORING The falling price of luxury</p> 
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