

The Fattest Nation in Asia

and how the Built Environment can help

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The new Michelin man....



Malaysia, the fattest nation in Asia

according to The Lancet Medical journal, that also found 14% of the Malaysian population to be obese

Overweight prevalence (%)



Source: WHO Non-Communicable Diseases Country Profiles, 2011





Malaysia, the fattest nation in Asia

Local press coverage in The Star newspaper


← → ↺ www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/health/2014/11/28/are-we-concerned-about-expanding-waistlines-in-malaysia/

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**FATTEST
IN
SOUTH-EAST ASIA**

Our love of fat and carb-heavy dishes, coupled with a preference for a sedentary lifestyle, has earned Malaysia the nickname 'The Fattest Country in South-East Asia'.

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Malaysia, the fattest nation in Asia

International press coverage (February 2016)

← → ↻ www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/02/obesity-statistics-ring-alarm-bells-malaysia-160203131123319.html

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HEALTH

Obesity statistics ring alarm bells in Malaysia

Officials blame high-calorie diet and sedentary urban lifestyle as half the population is deemed overweight or obese.

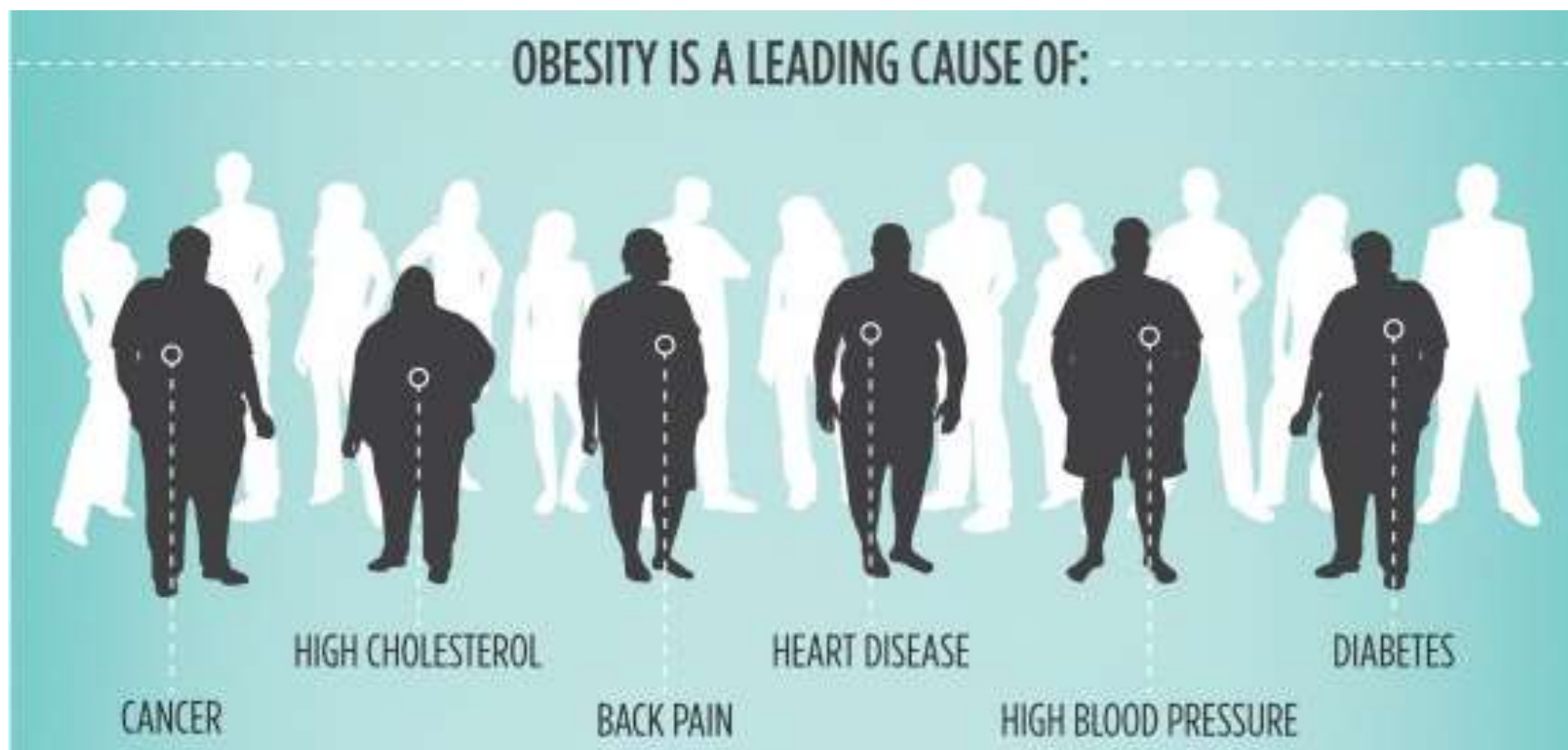
[Stephanie Scawen](#) | 03 Feb 2016 17:51 GMT | Health, Asia Pacific, Malaysia

    Engagement: 1471



Obesity statistics ring alarm bells because....



The Malaysian Health Ministry of Health says there is an **epidemic** of non-communicable diseases (NCD), including diabetes.

(medical condition or disease that is non-infectious or non-transmissible)

Why is Malaysia the fattest nation in Asia?

1. Physically inactive lifestyles (less than 150 minutes of exercise per week)

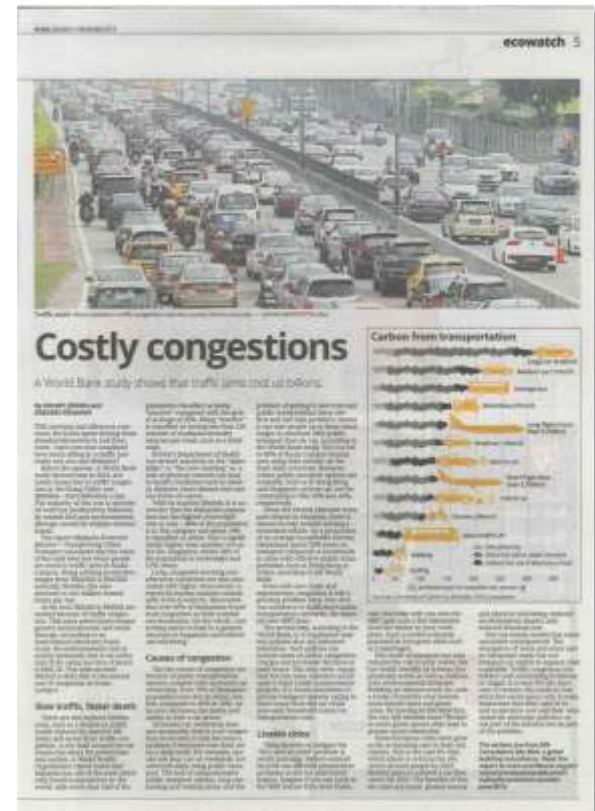
More than half of Malaysian are physically inactive, whereas the global average is only 20%

2. High car ownership

80% of KL inhabitants use car for daily commute, hence, reducing walking

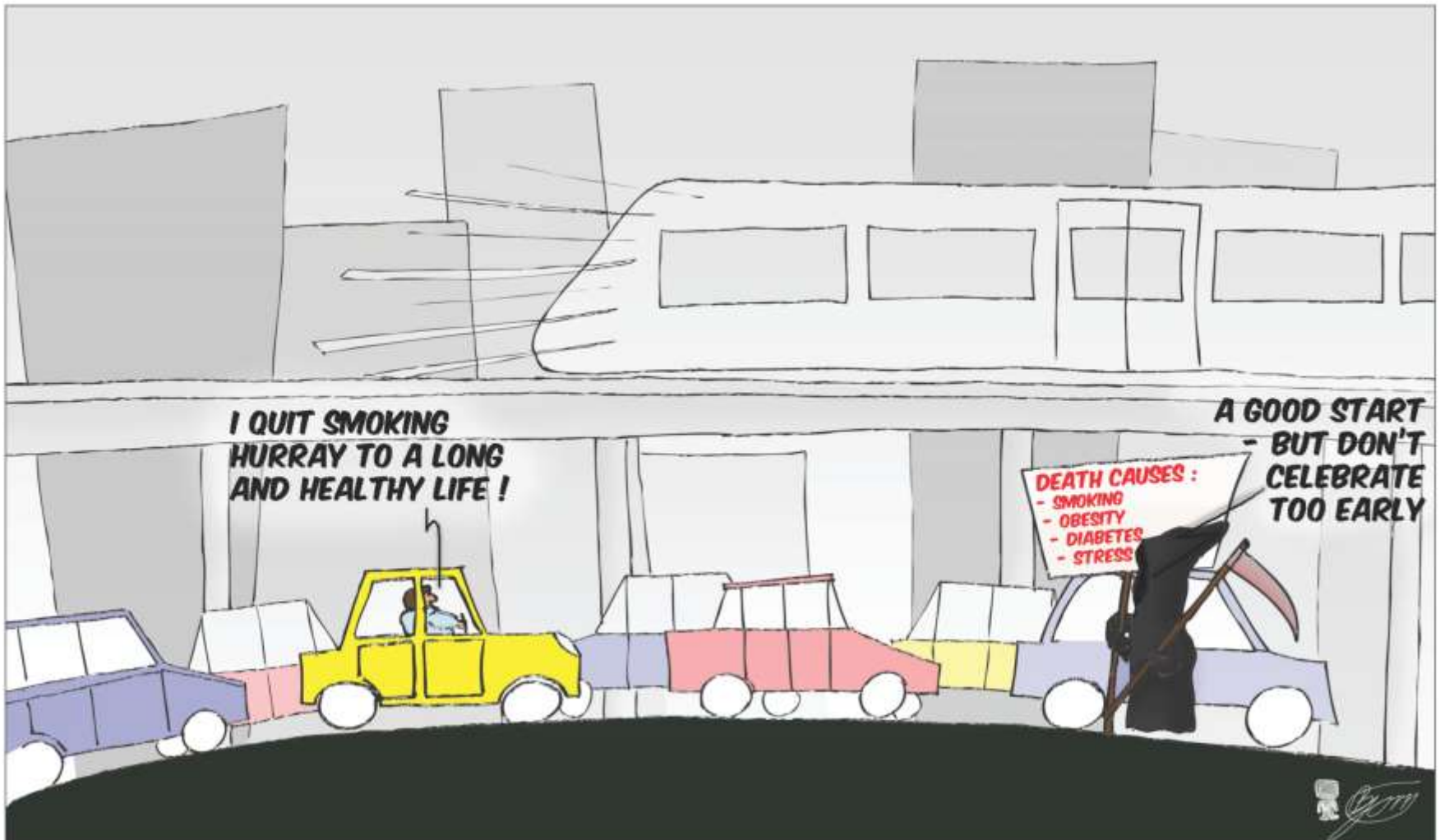
Malaysian's don't even like to drive
40% of Malaysians say that stress from traffic congestion is their primary frustration (Source: Frost & Sullivan)

Some answers in this article ([link](#))



By IEN Consultants, The Star, Dec 2016

Slow Traffic, Faster Death



Cartoon by IEN Consultants, 2016

Why is Malaysia the fattest nation in Asia?

- Hot & Humid climate is not conducive for walking / cycling
- But even in air-conditioned environments, people decline to walk

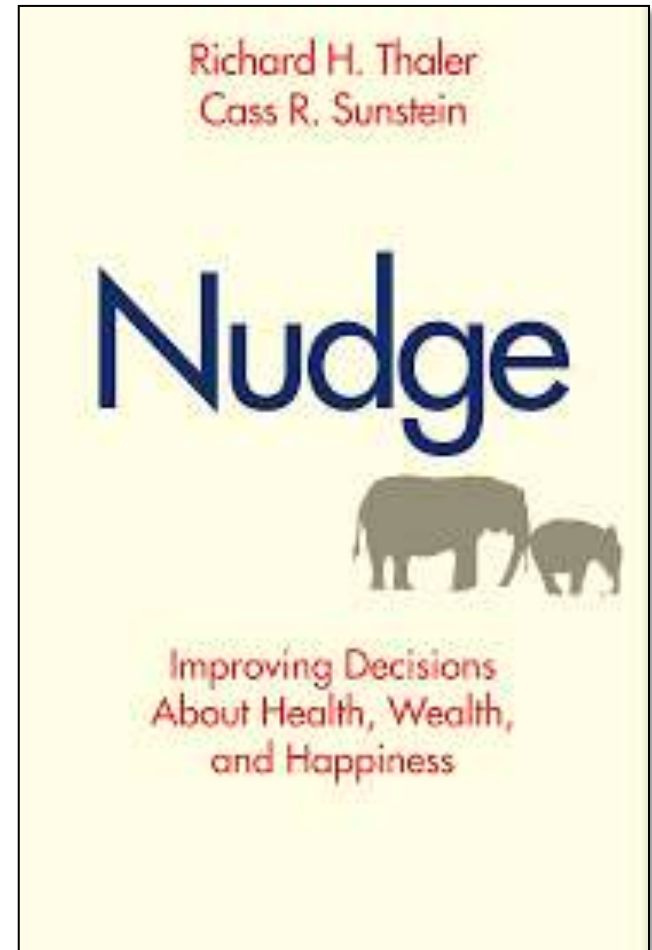


Using the Nudge Principle

Guiding people to a more controlled state such as eating healthier, stop smoking, exercising as saving more money

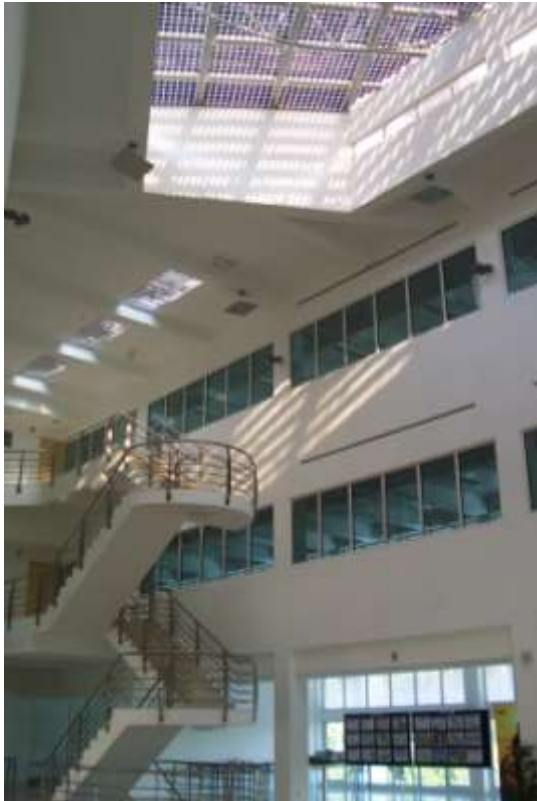
Example:

Urinal in mens toilet, but how to improve their aim?



The Nudge Principle examples in the Built Environment

**Prominent staircase
and hidden lift**



GEO Building, Greentech Malaysia, Bangi

**Fun 'piano' staircase
versus normal escalator**



*Odenplan subway station in Stockholm. **66%** increase in stairs usage*

The Nudge Principle examples in the Built Environment

1. Make it easy and/or cheaper to run or bicycle to work

- Implement shower/changing/locker facilities
- Implement bicycle parking
- Give incentives



2. Give staff opportunity to work

- in a standing position (adjustable table)
- standing/walking meetings
- flexible working hours and/or from home

3. Give healthy food choices at work

- pantry
- staff canteen



1 million hours waste per day

in the traffic congestions of greater Kuala Lumpur

Cost of Kuala Lumpur Traffic Jams

-  Time Wastage
-  Fuel Wastage
-  Environmental Harm

LET'S HAVE A
MOMENT OF SILENCE
FOR ALL THE KL-ites
WHO ARE STUCK IN
TRAFFIC ON THEIR
WAY TO THE GYM TO
RIDE STATIONARY
BICYCLES.



**RM54 MILLION
PER DAY!**

My proposed solution:

BICYCLE & MAKAN (Bicycle and eat)

The city of Kuala Lumpur

1. Builds proper bicycling infrastructure linking suburbs to the city
2. Builds a few centrally located Bicycle Centers, where a **free** and healthy breakfast is given to all bicycle commuters
3. While eating, the cyclists cool down and are ready to shower and change at the Bicycle Center nearest their work place

**Both congestion and health
are improved**

Infographic by IEN Consultants

Concluding remarks

- Obesity is epidemic in Malaysia
- Obesity is unhealthy and costly to society
- The build environment can nudge people to healthier lifestyles
- Urban planning and incentives are also part of the solution
- It's a collaborative effort to reverse the obesity epidemic!



Thank you



ANY QUESTIONS?

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IEN Consultants took part in the World Diabetes Day, lighting up the Twin Towers in dark blue (Nov 2014) and raising awareness of how the built environment help to improve our health