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Sarawak Needs RM150 Million To Seed Reef Balls And Conserve Marine Life

KUCHING, Oct 25 (Bernama) - To conserve marine life, especially the endangered sea turtle, Sarawak needs RM150 million to seed 100,000 reef balls along its coastline in the next five years.

Planning and Resource Management Ministry's Deputy Permanent Secretary Datuk Len Talif Salleh said the environment-friendly reef balls could mimic the natural limestone of coral reefs and enhance marine habitat and enrich marine resources.

"To protect the critical habitat and migration routes of the endangered sea turtle along the almost 1,000km coastline of Sarawak, we plan to seed 20,000 reef balls annually, for the next five years," he said.

Len Talif was speaking to reporters after the deployment of 306 reef balls in the north of Talang-Satang National Parks, which is also known as Sarawak Turtle Islands near here.

The Sarawak Reef Ball Project which began in 1998, has clear-cut goals to reduce the mortality rate of nesting marine turtle, deter illegal trawlers and provide new habitat to protect other marine life.

Len Talif, who is also Sarawak Corporation Sdn Bhd managing director, said that currently, the number of turtle deaths was reported at about 20 annually as compared to between 70 and 100 before 1998.

He said the number of sea turtles nesting at the Sarawak Turtle Islands had increased from 737 in 2004 to 1,762 this year.

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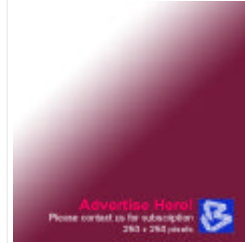
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Dear Editor,

TRANSIT invites the Prime Minister to review his Budget 2009 statement (No.30) that RapidKL has performed a satisfactory job by serving unprofitable social bus routes, as the rest of 86% profitable routes served has failed to meet the commuters' requirements. The yardstick to measure the profitability of mass transit must include the positive long term return that mass transit generates to the society while not disregarding the fact that private transportation, which is mass transit's fiercest competitor, does not bear the full costs it generates to the society (in terms of urban governance, socioeconomic and environmental issues). On behalf of the Association for the Improvement of Mass Transit (TRANSIT) Klang Valley.

From: M Zulkarnain Hamzah
Shah Alam

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