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Freezing wetland wonders on film

DENKIL, Sat. - Thirty primary school pupils from all over Klang Valley had the opportunity to freeze nature on film when they attended the New Straits Times in Education (NIE)-Paya Indah Wetlands Young Photography Workshop at Paya Indah Wetlands today.

The participants, who are in the 10-12 age group, registered for the one-day workshop which introduced them to the basic principles of photography.

Renowned photographer Eric Peris conducted the workshop.

Peris said the workshop was not only about photography. It was also an opportunity for the children to develop their thinking skills and learn self-discipline.

"They must decide what pictures to take and justify their reasons for doing so. As the film exposure of the disposable cameras is limited, they must use it wisely," he added.

The students roamed some of the attractions, including the Palm Garden, Rumah Melayu, Macarangga trail, the Meadows and the Viewing Deck for ideas.

To put their picture taking skills to the test, the students were equipped with disposable cameras, sponsored by Fuji Photo Film (M) Sdn Bhd, which were presented by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the launch of Paya Indah Wetlands on Oct 13.

Paya Indah was abuzz with activity yesterday, when Dr Mahathir and wife Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, on their way to the Prime Minister's Department's "Family Day" in Putrajaya, stopped over at the wetlands. Dr Mahathir released a pair of hippopotamuses into the lake. They were brought to Paya Indah from Botswana in September.

Meanwhile, at the photography workshop, Peris told the participants to use their creativity and judgment in taking the pictures.

Thus, Sandiya Supramaniam, 12, from Kelana Jaya decided to concentrate on images of colourful flowers and rare wildlife.

The Sekolah Kebangsaan Sri Kelana student said she was initially reluctant to join the workshop.

"But after reading articles on the place, I decided to give it a try."

Twelve-year-old Chua Wei Kiang said he joined the workshop because he rarely got the chance to enjoy nature. And Mohamed Izzat Fauzi Mohamed Yunan, whose hobby is photography, said "Paya Indah is the perfect haunt for photographers."

The workshop ended with a visit to the Exploration Centre which houses a photo exhibition of wetlands around the world.

A treasure hunt organised by the National Press Club, themed 'Park N' Park', was also held, involving some 160 participants.

Paya Indah Wetlands is open from Tuesday to Friday from 8.30am-7.30pm and from 7.30am-7.30pm on weekends.

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