

06/09/2001

Underwater photo contest for 'Save Turtles Fund'

PETALING JAYA, Wed. - More Malaysians should take advantage of the country's beautiful underwater world and explore its many wonders.

Malaysian Sport Diving Association president Mukhriz Mahathir said this would increase the appreciation and awareness of the nation's rich marine life, thereby encouraging conservation.

"Its a case of Tak kenal maka tak cinta (You do not know, therefore you do not love) and if people see for themselves the beauty under the water, they will think twice about throwing things into our seas", he said.

Mukhriz was launching the MSDA's National Underwater Photo Contest at World Wildlife Fund Malaysia's headquarters in Taman SEA here.

The contest is to promote marine tourism among local and international scuba divers. It is co-ordinated by MSDA, a non-profit association comprising resorts, dive centres and dive instructors.

Fifty per cent of the entry fees collected by MSDA from the contest will be donated to WWF Malaysia for its "Save the Turtle" Fund.

WWF Malaysia embarked on the project in 1999 to promote turtle conservation.

WWF Malaysia executive director Datuk Dr Mikaaail Kavanagh Abdullah said the rapid decline of turtles should be addressed.

Events like the contest, he said, provided an avenue to promote awareness on the matter.

The year-long contest is also to help divers understand the fragile aquatic and marine environments. The winning entry for the contest will be announced in Sept 2002. Each slide entry will be charged US\$10 (RM38).

Information on the contest is available at most local resorts and at www.underwatermalaysia.com or WWF's website at www.wwfmalaysia.org.

Submission dateline for all entries is Aug 15 2002

(END)