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Ex-PM still shows concern for islands' development

By Professor Phang Siew Moi

THE Malaysian Society of Marine Sciences (MSMS) is greatly encouraged by recent news reports which clearly indicate that our country's leadership understands, appreciates and cares for our precious natural heritage.

We would like to salute Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for the sound advice which he expressed recently, with regard to Pulau Tioman in particular and the islands of Malaysia in general.

Our former Prime Minister once again showed his wisdom and concern when he advised that the Government should plan and develop each island separately, according to their potential and limitations, with due regard to preserving the environment and beauty of each of the islands.

We would also like to congratulate the Tourism, Culture & Environment Minister of Sabah, Datuk Chong Kah Kiat, for preventing over-development and degradation of the fragile marine environment at Pulau Sipadan and for his efforts to get this precious world-class diving destination listed as a World Heritage site.

Such concern and proactiveness augur well for Malaysia's fragile coastal and island heritage.

MSMS stands ready to contribute and help in the sustainable development or ecological restoration of our fragile environment, in particular the islands and their inherent marine resources.

The society is well represented, with diverse membership ranging from marine enthusiasts to established scientists from the various universities and research institutions in Malaysia.

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