

Reports by MOHD FARHAAN SHAH, JOHN BARRY, STEPHEN THEN and REMAR NORDIN

Perak Sultan shares son's 2015 plastic pollution message

KUALA LUMPUR: In 2015, while travelling along Sungai Perak, Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah's then seven-year-old son Raja Azlan Muzaffar Shah, took to counting plastic bottles floating on the water.

At the end of the 65km journey from Pasir Salak to Teluk Intan, he had spotted 700 bottles, recalled Sultan Nazrin.

The journey was made in conjunction with his installation as the 35th Sultan of Perak.

The Sultan shared this personal anecdote to illustrate how much

nature had suffered in the hands of mankind.

The Ruler said extreme human interference in nature's ecosystems coupled with human activities which use natural resources to make unbridled business profits, have caused the world today to face a rise in natural disasters.

Forests and trees which have played a vital role in containing climate change and global warming, apart from providing protection to water sources, reducing soil erosion and preventing floods, are no longer prioritised.

He said forests are viewed as sources of timber which can be sold for profit and this has led to rampant illegal logging spurred by greed.

"Without trees and forests, all the benefits of nature are lost, plant and animal species decrease, natural habitats are destroyed, the food chain is broken and human life is threatened," Sultan Nazrin said, adding that the integral function of trees is manifested in the teachings of Prophet Muhammad.

The Sultan said this when launching the book entitled *40*

Hadis Pelestarian Alam Sekitar (40 Teachings on Preserving the Environment), authored by academics Prof Datuk Seri Dr Zaini Ujang and Prof Datuk Dr Zulkifli Mohd Yusoff, at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia's campus here yesterday.

On river pollution, he said that according to data from the Department of Environment, Malaysia had lost 102 rivers over a 10-year-period, leaving it with 477 today.

Of the 477 rivers in existence, only 219 were categorised as clean,

with 207 and 51 categorised as semi-polluted and polluted respectively.

Sultan Nazrin urged all parties to do their part in protecting and preserving the environment, and not to assume that it was only the government's responsibility to do so.

He also expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the two academics who have focused on the religious dimension in helping to instil awareness among Muslims to be more considerate and proactive towards the environment and its preservation. — Bernama