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'FRESH APPROACH TO SAFEGUARD RIVERS NEEDED'

Many still unaware, ignorant about issues concerning river management, says Sultan Nazrin

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SULTAN of Perak Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah has called for a fresh approach that is more organised and forward-thinking to address weaknesses in the country's river basin management.

He said despite the policies and programmes put in place, it was evident that many people were unaware of or indifferent to the issues surrounding river management.



Sultan of Perak Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah at the launch of the 'Tafsir Mawdu'i Sungai' book by Professor Datuk Dr Zulkifli Mohd Yusoff (right) and Datuk Seri Dr Zaini Ujang (second from right) at Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, yesterday. With him are Deputy Human Resources Minister Mustapha Sakmud (second from left) and UM Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Mohd Hamdi Abdul Shukor (left).

PIC BY HAIRUL ANUAR RAHIM

Sultan Nazrin said Malaysia must draw inspiration from countries that had effectively preserved their rivers and expediently develop new policies and approaches tailored to the unique challenges it faced.

"Preserving our rivers consists of cultural and geopolitical elements that cannot be effectively addressed through a rigid and segmented framework. River preservation involves a comprehensive effort to improve and boost the quality of river water, ensuring its cleanliness and usability.

"The responsibility for safeguarding our rivers extends to all stakeholders and it should not be limited to a specific agency or non-governmental organisation.

"(And) to underscore this responsibility, we must promote eco-friendly practices and cultivate a proactive willingness to contribute to or bear the necessary costs," he said during the launch of the *Tafsir Mawdu'i Sungai* book by Professor Datuk Dr Zulkifli Mohd Yusoff and

Datuk Seri Dr Zaini Ujang.

Sultan Nazrin also cited the 2021 Environmental Quality Report, which evaluated 670 monitored rivers in the country and revealed significant insight into the state of our waters.

Among the rivers surveyed, 73 per cent (489) exhibited clean water quality indices, while 24 per cent (158) were categorised as moderately polluted and three per cent (23) were identified as polluted.

Following this, Sultan Nazrin said rivers played a pivotal role in shaping the earth's existence and as the primary source of fresh water, which is the very essence of life for humankind.

He said it should be our utmost concern that rivers were being polluted.

"The health of our river ecosystem is a reflection of how much the hearts of our communities, from upstream to downstream, are connected to its conservation. Indeed, hardware (science and technology) and software (policy, regulation and norms) would not be sufficient without enough heart-ware to sustain and drive our efforts.

"Hence, it is essential to awaken the human soul to a sense of responsibility and foster genuine remorse for actions that harm the environment.

"A more compassionate approach should be cultivated, with the goal of boosting public awareness and willingness to preserve the environment."

At the same time, Sultan Nazrin congratulated the collaborative

efforts between the two authors on the book, which represented the harmonious integration of knowledge with management expertise and scientific and technological disciplines pertinent to rivers.

"The approach taken in this book, which involves bringing together experts from diverse disciplines, serves as a commendable way to foster the growth of knowledge.

"This synergy of expertise from different domains contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter at hand.

"Congratulations to both authors, publisher Academy of Jawi Malaysia, as well as Universiti Malaya, which organised this book launch."

DISEDIAKAN OLEH	PN NOR SURIANI BINTI MOHD ZIN (\$44), BPM
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