KEMENTERIAN TENAGA DAN SUMBER ASLI

KERATAN SURAT KHABAR

SURAT KHABAR	:	STAR METRO			
TARIKH	:	29/11/2021 (ISNIN)	MUKA SURAT	:	4
JABATAN	:	JPSM			





Council workers doing their bit for the environment at the mangrove planting programme in Balik Pulau. (Left pic) Yew (centre) joining other staff members at the event. — LIM BENG TATT/The Star

Forging ahead with green goal

Councils confident of reaching target to plant 100,000 mangrove saplings by 2023

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PENANG Island City Council (MBPP) has done its utmost to plant mangrove saplings to keep the swamps on the island healthy.

The council's goal to plant 50,000 saplings by 2023 was completed two years ahead of time.

MBPP has already planted 54,859 saplings.

MBPP mayor Datuk Yew Tung Seang said both MBPP and Seberang Prai City Council (MBSP) had targeted to plant 100,000 mangrove saplings, split evenly between the island and mainland.

"We are confident of achieving the goal of planting 100,000 saplings in all coastal areas statewide by 2023," said Yew.

He was speaking after launching the Penghijauan Malaysia Kempen Penanaman 100 juta pokok 2021-2025' at the Balik Pulau mangrove forest reserve off Jalan Bahru recently.

State Forestry Department director Muhammad Ezhar Yusoff said the forest reserve covered 166ha and only 1ha was used to plant the mangrove saplings called 'bakau api'.

Muhammad Ezhar said the species was the best to be planted in the area.



MBPP workers planting bakau minyak at the swampy area of the forest reserve in Kuala Sungai Pinang. — Filepic

"Mangroves are an important buffer in absorbing marine pollutants and stopping erosion.

"There are threats posed by monkeys pulling out the saplings but we managed to nurture the plants by ensuring they grow well after being planted," he said.

In January, MBPP planted 2,020 'bakau minyak' mangrove saplings at Kampung Nelayan in Kuala Sungai Pinang near Balik Pulau.

More than 100 staff members of the council's Landscape Department took part in the programme.



A fishing jetty (bottom right) at Sungai Tembus that cuts through the Penaga mangrove forest in Seberang Prai. — Filepic

Penang has seen threats to mangrove swamps including illegal clearing and aquaculture activities that lead to pollution from excess waste and use of chemicals.

Environmental groups have been calling for the Penaga mangrove forest on the mainland to be gazetted as a permanent forest reserve.

On Nov 1, 2019, *The Star* carried an exclusive report on the Penaga mangrove forest which had amazed experts after growing from only 200ha two decades ago to almost 600ha now.