



**UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
JABATAN PERIKANAN MALAYSIA
BERITA PERIKANAN HARI INI**

**19 Mac 2023
26 Sya'ban 1444H**

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It's 'raining prawns' in Penang

Fishermen rejoicing over bountiful catches but saving up for unpredictable times

By LO TERN CHERN
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GEORGE TOWN: If you have been raising your eyebrows over the prices of various meats, here is some good news.

Catches from the sea by inshore fishermen in Penang are pouring in, sometimes so much that even storing them has become a challenge.

Large shrimps are especially plentiful, followed by silver pomfrets.

"During low seasons, we would receive only between 50kg and 60kg of prawns from fishermen each day.

"Since end-January, we received much more, averaging between 100kg and 200kg and up to 500kg daily," said a fishmonger who wished to be known only as Siang at Cecil Street Market yesterday.

Siang said fishmongers were committed to buy everything caught by inshore fishermen, which has led to another challenge of storing them.

"Due to tremendous supply, we reduced the price of large prawns from RM60 per kg to as low as RM53 per kg so that people will buy more.

"Our freezer storage is quickly filling up. We have not seen such good harvests from the sea in the past 10 years.

"Hopefully, the stock would help us survive through bad seasons when harvests are low," he said.

Inshore fishermen in the south of Penang island confirm that catches have been good, particularly large prawns and also "everyday fish" like cencaru (torpedo scad, popularly stuffed with sambal belacan and then fried throughout Malaysia).

Pak Wan, a 57-year-old fisherman in Balik Pulau, said he had not seen prawns in his net for over a year but they started returning about two weeks ago.

"Fishermen in Balik Pulau waters have not caught prawns for over a year and had to travel up to 18km to Teluk Kumbar to catch them.

"Since about two weeks ago, we started seeing their return and now, a boat of three fishermen who spend between four and five hours at sea can return with at least 20kg of prawns.

"This is good news for us as we missed out on the catches during Chinese New Year season," he said.

Another fisherman in Sungai Batu who only wished to be known as Ahmad, 39, said the season this year was better than previous years.

"I get roughly 25% more catches this season, from January to March.

"Not just me, many other fishermen here are rejoicing over the



Catch of the day: Fish sellers arranging their seafood at Cecil Street Market, Penang. — CHAN BOON KAI/The Star

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increase in catches," said Ahmad, who has been a fisherman for over 10 years there.

Penang Fisheries Department director Yazeereen A Bakar said the increase in fishes and prawns are usually seasonal each year, and indeed this is now the season in the northern region.

"Usually, the season in which they

lay eggs will be around September and the new spawn reaches mature sizes between March and June.

"Fishermen associations have given feedback that they can now breathe a sigh of relief and help to recover losses during poor seasons in the past.

"As there are more to catch, some fishermen are going out to sea more

often to reap the profits for their future savings.

"Any surplus would be stored in freezers to help keep supplies stable during shortages," she said.

Yazeereen, however, said this year's yield from the sea remain unpredictable as the amounts that landed in Penang saw a drop in 2021 compared with previous years.

"In 2020, about 58,000 tonnes of fishes landed, but the amount dropped to only 38,000 tonnes in 2021.

"We landed up to 70,000 tonnes a year in the past, before rapid development around our sea started," she said.

The seas, however, evidently have not brought the same blessing for Selangor of late.

Selangor Fisheries director Noraisyah Abu Bakar said catch reports from inshore fishermen in Sekinchan and Kuala Selangor have been normal, and some reported that catches have been a little low.

"We confirm that in January, Selangor fishermen enjoyed super-abundant catches of kembong (Indian mackerel). But that season has passed.

"Natural seafood resources move up and down the Strait of Malacca with the seasons. It is never the same between states," she said.

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Penyu lipas kembali ke Pulau Pinang

GEORGETOWN - Sebanyak 110 ekor anak penyu lipas yang baharu menetas ditemui di pantai berdekatan Hotel Angsana di Teluk Bahang pada Rabu lalu.

Kesemua anak penyu tersebut ditemui orang awam sebelum memaklumkan kepada Jabatan Perikanan Pulau Pinang untuk tindakan selanjutnya.

Pengarah Jabatan Perikanan Pulau Pinang, Yazeereen A Bakar berkata, pihaknya menerima satu laporan daripada orang awam yang menjumpai anak-anak penyu lipas menetas di pantai berkenaan.

Menurutnya, pasukan Kawangan Konservasi dan Perlindungan Sumber Jabatan Perikanan Pulau Pinang telah ke tempat kejadian dan mendapati terdapat 110 ekor anak penyu lipas telah menetas.

"Anak-anak penyu lipas berkenaan telah dibawa ke Pusat Konservasi Penyu Pantai Kerachut untuk tujuan pemuliharaan dan penjagaan lanjut sebelum dilepaskan semula ke laut.

"Kami mengucapkan se-

Sinar M331 16/3



Sebanyak 110 ekor anak penyu lipas yang ditemui di Teluk Bahang letakkan di Pusat Konservasi Penyu Pantai Kerachut untuk pemuliharaan sebelum dilepaskan semula ke laut.



YAZEEREEN

tinggi-tinggi penghargaan kepada orang awam yang melaporkan keberadaan penyu di pantai sekitar Pulau Pinang," katanya dalam kenyataan pada Sabtu.

Beliau berkata, Pulau Pinang merupakan antara negeri yang terkenal dengan kehadiran penyu lipas di Malaysia selain Pahang dan Terengganu.

"Bagaimanapun, trend

pendaratan penyu lipas di Malaysia dan di Pulau Pinang semakin berkurangan disebabkan faktor ancaman semula jadi serta manusia.

"Kali terakhir penyu lipas direkodkan bertelur di pantai sekitar Pulau Pinang pada tahun 2019 lalu," katanya.

Penyu lipas adalah penyu yang terkecil antara semua jenis penyu yang terdapat di dunia.

Purata saiz badannya adalah antara 15 hingga 65 sentimeter panjang dengan berat badannya sehingga 50 kilogram.