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JABATAN PERIKANAN MALAYSIA
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KATEGORI LIPUTAN: POSITIF		NEGATIF	NEUTRAL	6	3/6/2023

The whispers are back at Pasar Bisik

By IMRAN HILMY
imran@thestar.com.my

KEPALA BATAS: Whispering to each other was impossible during the Covid-19 pandemic, but now that life is back to normal, the unique hush of the Pasar Bisik fisherman's market is back.

For two years, during the movement control order, fishermen and buyers at Pasar Bisik in Kota Kuala Muda were forced to break their century-old tradition of conducting sales by murmuring into each other's ears.

Due to physical distancing rules, buyers and sellers at this market on the Kedah-Penang border had to haggle out loud.

But a recent visit found that the "old normal" is back.

Coastal fishermen come ashore and immediately haul their catches to the market floor.

It is so fresh that the prawns and crabs are still moving. But nothing is weighed or sorted and no offer prices are displayed.

Instead, the fishermen simply

wait quietly for interested buyers to whisper their bids after assessing the value of the catch by sight alone; the whispering is meant to keep the deals private and confidential.

This has gone on for over a century, and is also the practice in fishing villages in Japan and the Philippines.

Norasiah Ramli, 49, from Kuala Lumpur, said she was surprised to see how business was conducted at Pasar Bisik.

"I was shocked when the fisherman refused to entertain my queries about his prawns, but instead asked me to whisper the price to him," she said.

The housewife said after a few failed bids, she was happy to finally obtain slightly over a kilo of prawns for RM80.

"These were the freshest prawns I ever bought," she said.

Another visitor, Mahizan Mokhtar, 40, from Sungai Dua, said he was a regular at Pasar Bisik.

"Normally, I will buy two or



Ask and you shall receive: The price whispering practice seen in full swing at Pasar Bisik in Kuala Muda, on the Kedah side of the Kedah-Penang border. — ZHAFARAN NASIB/The Star

three kilos of fish and sometimes prawns or crabs," he said.

A weighing scale is placed at one side of the market's pavilion for buyers to weigh their purchases and one such buyer was seen weighing a kilo of threadfin fish (senangin), which she bought for RM25.

In other markets, the price

would be about RM30 to RM40.

But the fishermen lament that their daily catches are dwindling because of deepsea trawlers plying near their fishing grounds.

Nazrin Othman, 46, who has been a coastal fisherman for 20 years, said the trawlers' heavy nets damaged the seabed and the breeding areas.

Another fisherman, Ariffin M 56, claimed to have seen large trawlers from neighbouring countries encroaching into coastal areas.

Meanwhile, fisherman Yas Hamid, 55, urged the government to sink more artificial reefs, as they are good breeding ground for fish and snag big trawler nets.

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KATEGORI LIPUTAN:		POSITIF		NEGATIF		NEUTRAL		15	3/6/2023

Major starfish outbreak detected

Response teams dive to catch invasive coral predators off Sabah's east coast

By DURIE RAINER FONG
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

KOTA KINABALU: A concerted clean-up is underway in Darvel Bay, off Sabah's east coast in Lahad Datu district, after a major outbreak of crown-of-thorns starfish (COTS) was detected.

Marine conservationists and government agencies are hard at work containing hundreds of those coral predators, which are threatening to destroy the coral reefs in the area.

Reef Check Malaysia (RCM), which partnered with the Sabah Tourism, Culture and Environment Ministry, has mobilised a team to eradicate the outbreak before it is too late.

The outbreak response team also includes divers from Sabah Parks, Lahad Datu Fisheries Department, Darvel Bay Diving Group and the NGO Larapan Youth.

RCM programme manager Nadhirah Mohd Rifai, a member of the outbreak response team, shared her experience handling COTS outbreaks over the years in Sabah.

"Although COTS is a natural predator of corals, major outbreaks such as the one happening now can cause major harm to the coral reefs," she said yesterday.

"One COTS can consume an

average of 13sq m of reef per year.

"Imagine the potential damage that could be inflicted by thousands of COTS," she added.

The team collected 485 COTS at Pulau Balik on Thursday and will spend the following three days controlling the population of the invasive starfish species in Darvel Bay.

If the COTS had been feeding for months unattended, Nadhirah said, most of the corals would have been dead.

"We need to take immediate action to reduce the population of the COTS before they wreak any further irreversible damage," she said.

She said COTS outbreaks could be influenced by changes in the marine environment such as reduced water quality and increased water temperature.

"Due to overfishing, there are also fewer natural predators like the Giant Triton Snail and the Titan Triggerfish to keep the number of COTS in check naturally," she said.

Nadhirah said the team used an efficient and reef-safe method for the clean-up, which is physically removing and burying the COTS on land.

Conveying RCM's appreciation to the state ministry for supporting the effort, she said an effective



communication strategy was the key to the outbreak response plan.

She noted that the response plan prepared by the RCM Sabah team was used to identify different stakeholder groups and decision-makers.

"I am glad that we are able to do our part to keep our reef healthy and safe," she said as they finished the first day of the COTS clean-up.



Coral threat: (Top) A diver carrying a bucketful of crown-of-thorns starfish from the bottom of the sea; the crown-of-thorns starfish waiting to be buried. — Photo courtesy of Reef Check Malaysia

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KATEGORI LIPUTAN: POSITIF			NEGATIF		NEUTRAL			28	30/6/2023

Enam nelayan asing ditahan di perairan Malaysia

GEORGETOWN - Enam nelayan Indonesia ditahan Agensi Penguatkuasaan Maritim Malaysia (Maritim Malaysia) Pulau Pinang pada Khamis.

Pengarah Maritim Pulau Pinang, Kepten Maritim Abd Razak Mohamed berkata, pihaknya menahan bot dari Indonesia pada kedudukan 48.0 batu nautika barat daya Pulau Kendi pada jam 12 tengah hari.

"Bot itu ditahan kerana disyaki melakukan aktiviti menangkap ikan di perairan Malaysia tanpa kebenaran.

"Hasil pemeriksaan mendapati bot terbabit tidak mempunyai nombor pendaftaran dan dikendalikan oleh enam nelayan termasuk tekong warga Indonesia berusia lingkungan 18 hingga 51 tahun,"



Bot nelayan asing yang dinaiki enam nelayan Indonesia ditahan pada Khamis.

katanya dalam kenyataan pada Jumaat.

Ujarnya, semua nelayan asing itu tidak memiliki dokumen pengenalan diri dan pas perjalanannya sah.

"Kesemua mereka ditahan mengikut Akta

Perikanan 1985 dan Seksyen 6(1)(C) Akta Imigresen 1959/63.

"Bot, kru serta 50 liter minyak diesel dirampas dan dibawa ke Jeti Limbungan Batu Maung untuk siasatan lanjut," ujarnya.