



**LAPORAN LIPUTAN MEDIA HARIAN  
ISNIN 22 DISEMBER 2025**

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UKK KPKM

UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT  
KEMENTERIAN PERTANIAN DAN KETERJAMINAN MAKANAN  
(UNTUK EDARAN DALAMAN KPKM, JABATAN DAN AGENSI SAHAJA)

TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
22/12/2025	BERITA HARIAN	BISNES	24

Tengku Ahmad (kiri) dan Ketua Pegawai Operasi Kumpulan Agrobank, Zahid Ahmad Zawawi melancarkan AgroGold Account-i, di Putrajaya, kelmarin. (Foto Asyraf A. Izz, BH)



# Agrobank beri peluang simpanan emas RM10

**AgroGold Account-i patuh syariah produk inovatif penuhi keperluan kewangan mampan**

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Agrobank baru-baru ini melancarkan produk terbaharunya, AgroGold Account-i, akaun simpanan emas patuh syariah yang direka khas bagi memberi peluang kepada rakyat Malaysia memiliki emas secara selamat, telus dan berlandaskan prinsip kewangan Islam.

Presiden dan Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Kumpulan Agrobank, Datuk Tengku Ahmad Badli Shah Raja Hussin, berkata produk inovatif itu membolehkan pelanggan

membuat pembelian, simpanan dan penjualan emas fizikal dengan ketulenan 999.9, sekali gus menawarkan alternatif simpanan bernilai stabil dan berdaya tahan dalam jangka panjang.

"AgroGold Account-i ditawarkan pada nilai kompetitif serta menyokong reputasi Agrobank sebagai institusi kewangan pembangunan yang komited memperkasa kesejahteraan kewangan masyarakat, khususnya dalam sektor agro dan luar bandar.

"Pelancaran produk ini selari dengan keperluan semasa pelanggan yang mencari instrumen simpanan mampan di tengah persekitaran ekonomi yang mencahar," katanya ketika pelancaran AgroGold Account-i di Putrajaya.

Tengku Ahmad Badli Shah berkata, AgroGold Account-i turut memberi peluang kepada orang ramai untuk memulakan simpanan emas dengan nilai serendah RM10, sekali gus menjadikannya mudah diakses oleh semua lapisan masyarakat.

"AgroGold Account-i adalah

satu langkah strategik Agrobank dalam menyediakan simpanan alternatif yang patuh syariah, mudah diakses dan relevan dengan keperluan pelanggan masa kini," katanya.

## Kempen Peluang Keemasan

Beliau berkata, Agrobank yakin produk berkenaan mampu membantu pelanggan mempelbagaikan perancangan kewangan mereka dengan lebih mampan, di samping mengekalkan nilai simpanan dalam jangka panjang.

Selain pelancaran produk, Agrobank turut memperkenalkan Kempen Peluang Keemasan bagi menggalakkan penyertaan awal pelanggan terhadap AgroGold Account-i.

Melalui kempen itu, pelanggan berpeluang memenangi pelbagai hadiah menarik termasuk bawcar Habib serta hadiah cabutan utama berupa dua buah motosikal Honda Vario 125.

Bagi melayakkan penyertaan dalam kempen berkenaan, pelanggan hanya perlu mem-

buat transaksi pembelian emas melalui AgroGold Account-i, di mana setiap pembelian akan memberi peluang menyertai cabutan dan ganjaran yang ditawarkan, tertakluk kepada terma dan syarat.

Kempen Peluang Keemasan bukan sahaja bertujuan menarik minat pelanggan baharu, malah menggalakkan amalan simpanan emas secara berterusan dalam kalangan pelanggan sedia ada.

Langkah itu selari dengan komitmen Agrobank untuk memperkukuh kesejahteraan kewangan pelanggan dalam jangka masa panjang melalui instrumen simpanan yang stabil dan patuh Syariah.

Pelancaran AgroGold Account-i serta kempen berkaitan turut mencerminkan komitmen berterusan Agrobank dalam memperkenalkan produk inovatif yang relevan dengan keperluan pelanggan, sejajar dengan mandat bank untuk menyokong keterangkuman kewangan dan pembangunan ekonomi negara.

TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	NUKA SURAT
22/12/2025	HARIAN METRO	BISNES	23



TENGGU Ahmad Badli Shah (kiri) ketika melancarkan AgroGold Account-i di IOI Mall Putrajaya.

## AGROBANK LANCAR AGROGOLD ACCOUNT-I

# Simpan emas patuh syariah serendah RM10

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### Putrajaya

**O**rang ramai kini berpeluang menyimpan dan memiliki emas patuh syariah bermula serendah RM10 menerusi AgroGold Account-i, produk terbaharu akaun simpanan emas yang dilancarkan Agrobank.

AgroGold Account-i direka khas bagi memberi peluang kepada rakyat Malaysia memiliki emas se-

cara selamat, telus dan berlandaskan prinsip kewangan Islam, selain mudah diakses serta sesuai untuk semua lapisan masyarakat.

Presiden/Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Kumpulan Agrobank, Datuk Tengku Ahmad Badli Shah Raja Hussin berkata, produk itu membolehkan pelanggan membeli, menyimpan dan menjual emas fizikal berketulenan 999.9 pada nilai yang kompetitif.

Menurutnya, produk berkenaan mampu membantu

pelanggan mempelbagaikan perancangan kewangan secara lebih mampan serta menjadi instrumen simpanan bernilai stabil dan berdaya tahan dalam jangka panjang.

"Pelancaran AgroGold Account-i ini mengukuhkan peranan Agrobank sebagai institusi kewangan pembangunan yang komited memperkasa kesejahteraan kewangan masyarakat, khususnya komuniti agro dan luar bandar," katanya kepada pemberita selepas melancarkan pro-

duk itu di sini, baru-baru ini.

Seiring pelancaran berkenaan, Agrobank turut memperkenalkan Kempen Peluang Keemasan yang menawarkan pelbagai hadiah menarik termasuk baucar Habib dan hadiah cabutan utama dua motosikal Honda Vario 125.

Menurutnya, pelanggan layak menyertai kempen itu dengan membuat transaksi pembelian emas melalui AgroGold Account-i, tertakluk kepada terma dan syarat yang ditetapkan.

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Putrajaya

**P**eneraju dalam pembiayaan pertanian dan perbankan, Agrobank meraikan pemenang Kempen Mega Million 2.0 melalui Majlis Penyerahan Hadiah yang mengiktiraf pemenang utama dan bulanan bagi Ogos, September dan Oktober tahun ini.

Dalam majlis itu, pemenang bertuah, Sha'arah Bidin, 74, dari Perlis membawa pulang hadiah utama kempen iaitu sebuah Ford Ranger Raptor.

Presiden/Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Kumpulan Agrobank, Datuk Tengku Ahmad Badli Shah Raja Hussin berkata, kempen Mega Million 2.0 menawarkan hadiah bernilai lebih RM2.5 juta itu menerima sambutan yang amat menggalakkan.

"Pelbagai produk termasuk deposit, pembiayaan, takaful dan penulisan wasiat berjaya melepasi sasaran yang ditetapkan.

"Bagi produk deposit kami berjaya mencapai RM390 juta manakala produk Ar-Rahnu, kami berjaya melepasi jangkaan dengan pencapaian RM1.2 bilion.

"Selain itu, pencapaian Hartani-i dan AgroCash-i masing-masing melonjak kepada 122 peratus dan 121 peratus. Pencapaian ini bukan sahaja menunjukkan keyakinan pelanggan terhadap produk Agrobank, malah membuktikan keupayaan kami menyediakan penyelesaian kewangan yang relevan kepada pelanggan," katanya.

Menurutnya, melihat prospek kejayaan, Agrobank yakin bahawa Kempen Mega Million mempunyai potensi besar untuk diteruskan dan dikembangkan lagi.

"Agrobank turut melancarkan Kempen Mega Million 3.0 bermula pada 1 November lalu hingga 31 Oktober tahun depan.

"Kempen ini menawarkan hadiah utama iaitu sebuah Ford Ranger Raptor dan cabutan bulanan Proton X50 melalui janglanan produk Agrobank seperti AgroPrimaS, AgroCash-i, Hartani-i, Ar-Rahnu, Takaful Kasih Plus, Agro Madani, Agro Nurani, Penulisan Wasiat dan Motor Takaful.

"Sebagai kesinambungan siri kempen terdahulu, Mega Million 3.0 diteruskan bagi memperkukuh kejayaan yang dicapai melalui Mega Million 1.0 dan 2.0,"



TENGGU Ahmad Badli Shah (tiga dari kanan) bersama Ketua Pemasaran dan Komunikasi Kumpulan Agrobank, Intan Syazwani Isa (dua dari kiri) dan Ketua Bahagian Perbankan Pelanggan Agrobank, Zulhisham Zailan (kiri) bergambar dengan pemenang hadiah utama Kempen Mega Million 2.0, Sha'arah pada Majlis Pelancaran Kempen Mega Million 3.0 di Pusat Membeli-Belah IOI City Mall, Putrajaya. - Gambar NSTP/AIZUDDIN SAAD

## AGROBANK RAI PEMENANG KEMPER MEGA MILLION 2.0

# Rezeki hujung usia menang kereta 'kuat'

katanya.

Katanya, ia dirangka untuk memperkukuh asas simpanan kos rendah yang ditawarkan Agrobank kepada pelanggan individu dan menggalakkan pelanggan memanfaatkan kemudahan pembiayaan seperti AgroCash-i dan Hartani-i.

"Selain itu, Agrobank juga ingin meningkatkan pembabitn pelanggan dengan perkhidmatan Ar-Rahnu melalui tawaran kadar margin yang mena-

rik dan kompetitif.

"Seiring dengan usaha bank menyediakan rangkaian penyelesaian kewangan yang menyeluruh bagi memenuhi keperluan pelanggan, kempen ini turut memberi peluang kepada pelanggan untuk memenangi pelbagai ganjaran menarik," katanya.

Terdahulu, Agrobank turut menyampaikan hadiah utama iaitu sebuah Toyota Hilux yang ditaja oleh PayNet, kepada pemilik So-

gno Coffee Sdn Bhd, Shailla Adnan sempena kempen Go Cashless, Ganjaran Hebat dengan DuitNow QR Agrobank.

Kempen yang berlangsung dari 1 Ogos hingga 30 November lalu itu bertujuan menggalakkan penggunaan DuitNow QR Agrobank dalam urusan harian perniagaan, khususnya dalam kalangan peniaga.

Selain hadiah utama, kempen itu turut mena-

warkan ganjaran bulanan kepada peniaga, di mana lima peniaga dengan jumlah transaksi DuitNow QR tertinggi melalui AGRONet Biz menerima hadiah wang tunai sebanyak RM500 setiap seorang.

Ketua Pegawai Komersial PayNet, Azrul Fakhzan Mainor berkata, inisiatif seperti kempen Go Cashless itu bertujuan memperkasa perniagaan kecil dengan menggalakkan penggunaan pembayaran digital

yang lebih mudah, selamat dan cekap.

"Melalui pendigitalan, peniaga kecil dapat meluaskan capaian pelanggan, meningkatkan kecekapan operasi dan kekal berdaya saing dalam ekonomi moden," katanya.

Sementara itu, Sha'arah ketika ditemui berkata, dia tidak menyangka di penghujung usia menerima kereta idaman iaitu Ford Ranger Raptor bagi memudahkannya mengusahakan bendang di Perlis.

"Memang sudah terdetik lama untuk mempunyai kereta 'kuat' ini supaya senang bawa baja dan benih padi, kebetulan ada pihak Agrobank beritahu saya dapat kereta ini.

"Alhamdulillah, syukur Ya Allah, ini adalah rezeki yang tidak disangka," katanya.

**"Seiring dengan usaha bank menyediakan rangkaian penyelesaian kewangan yang menyeluruh bagi memenuhi keperluan pelanggan, kempen ini turut memberi peluang kepada pelanggan untuk memenangi pelbagai ganjaran menarik"**

Tengku Ahmad Badli Shah



TENGGU Ahmad Badli Shah (tiga dari kiri) bersama Intan Syazwani (kiri) dan Zulhisham (kanan) bergambar dengan tiga pemenang Kempen Mega Million 2.0.

TARIKH	EDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
22/12/2025	UTUSAN MALAYSIA	DALAM NEGERI	7

## Beras tempatan mudah basi, berbau?

**PETALING JAYA:** Kualiti rendah seperti mudah basi, cepat berbau dan lembik menyebabkan beras tempatan tidak laku di pasaran berbanding beras import.

Anggota Sekutu Malaysia di Pusat Pilihan Pengguna, Tarmizi Anuar berkata, beras tempatan dikatakan kurang berkualiti daripada segi tekstur dan kebolehpakaian selepas dimasak.

Katanya, bagaimanapun dakwaan bahawa beras tempatan cepat basi atau berkualiti rendah perlu dilihat daripada sudut rantaian bekalan.

“Apabila harga dikawal terlalu ketat iaitu RM2.60 sekilogram, margin keuntungan pengeluaran menjadi sangat nipis. Dalam ekonomi, apabila harga siling ditetapkan terlalu rendah, pengeluaran kurang bermotivasi untuk melabur dalam teknologi pemrosesan, pengeringan dan storan yang canggih.

“Akibatnya, kualiti akhir beras di pasaran mungkin terjejas, mem-

bawa kepada isu beras berhabuk, pecah atau cepat rosak seperti yang diadukan pengguna,” katanya kepada *Utusan Malaysia*.

Sebelum ini, Kementerian Pertanian dan Keterjaminan Makanan dilaporkan mengakui peningkatan pengeluaran beras putih tempatan (BPT) masih berdepan cabaran apabila sambutan pembelian dalam kalangan pengguna kekal rendah iaitu sekitar 10 hingga 15 peratus sahaja.

Menterinya, Datuk Seri Mohamad Sabu berkata, walaupun isu BPT sering dibangkitkan secara lantang di Parlimen, realitinya permintaan di pasaran tidak seperti digambarkan.

Sementara itu, Pengerusi Pertubuhan Persaudaraan Pesawah Malaysia (PeSAWAH), Abdul Rashid Yob berkata, kualiti rendah adalah faktor utama beras tempatan kurang mendapat sambutan di pasaran.

Katanya, selepas dua tahun kehilangan BPT, rakyat lebih rela

membayar RM35 hingga RM40 untuk beras yang dirasakan lebih berkualiti walaupun jenis import.

“Harga siling RM26 sekilogram tidak relevan dengan kos semasa yang meningkat sejak 2006. Beras tempatan kini bercampur dengan beras import gred rendah dalam nisbah tertentu untuk dijual semula, menyebabkan persepsi kualiti rendah.

“Akibatnya, hanya 10 hingga 15 peratus beras tempatan berjaya dijual mengikut sasaran ditetapkan,” katanya.

Abdul Rashid berkata, kenyataan menteri mengenai kurangnya sambutan beras tempatan perlu diteliti berdasarkan fakta dan data sebenar.

Katanya, PeSAWAH telah mengeluarkan kenyataan bahawa subsidi RM150 juta untuk BPT yang disasarkan kepada golongan B40 telah diagihkan dengan sasaran RM24 juta kempit dan program itu berakhir pada Ogos lalu.

“Walaupun kerajaan menge-

kalkan harga RM26 untuk 10 kilogram, data menunjukkan hanya 75 peratus sahaja dibeli oleh rakyat bersamaan RM18 juta daripada RM24 juta yang diagihkan. Ini menunjukkan sambutan masih rendah,” katanya.

Abdul Rashid berkata, harga belian padi dan kos benih perlu seimbang dengan harga jualan beras tempatan.

“Harga belian padi kini RM1,500, harga benih RM56 hingga RM58, tetapi harga jualan beras masih kekal RM2.60 sekilogram. Ketidakseimbangan ini menyebabkan pengilang terpaksa mencampur beras tempatan dengan beras import untuk mengekalkan operasi, sekali gus menimbulkan manipulasi.

“Saya mencadangkan kerajaan menilai semula harga beras tempatan atau menambah bantuan sara hidup bagi memastikan pengeluaran tempatan dapat bertahan dan manipulasi beras dapat dikurangkan,” katanya.

TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
22/12/2025	UTUSAN MALAYSIA	DALAM NEGERI	10

## Nelayan terjejas air pasang besar terima bantuan

**LUMUT:** Seramai 25 orang nelayan laut di kawasan Batu 8, Lekir, Sitiawan di sini menerima sumbangan khas bencana alam daripada kerajaan negeri berikutan kerosakan peralatan menangkap ikan termasuk sampan akibat air pasang besar baru-baru ini.

Menurut seorang nelayan, Muhammad Haris Jamin, 34, yang juga orang kelainan upaya (OKU), dia tidak dapat turun ke laut hampir seminggu disebabkan air pasang besar.

“Hujan lebat pada 14 Disember lalu menyebabkan sampan rosak teruk, enjin dimasuki air serta kerosakan peralatan menangkap ikan termasuk pukut dan jala akibat air pasang besar.

“Selain itu, timbunan sisa bencana banjir menyebabkan kami tidak dapat turun ke laut untuk mencari rezeki bagi menampung kehidupan seharian,” katanya pada majlis penyerahan sumbangan di Jeti Lembaga Kemajuan Ikan Malaysia (LKIM), Pasir Pandak, Batu 8 Lekir, Sitiawan di sini.

Sumbangan disampaikan Pengerusi Jawatankuasa Pembangunan Luar Bandar, Per-

ladangan, Pertanian dan Industri Makanan negeri, Datuk Mohd. Zolkafly Harun.

Muhammad Haris berkata, kerugian yang dialami mencecah puluhan ribu ringgit selain jeti yang masih tidak boleh digunakan sepenuhnya.

“Kos membaiki mengambil masa, secara purata pendapatan saya sebulan sekitar RM1,500 yang perlu menampung isteri dan seorang pekerja. Bantuan oleh kerajaan negeri ini sedikit sebanyak dapat membantu untuk membaiki kerosakan aset menangkap ikan selain perbelanjaan makanan bulanan supaya dapat turun ke laut secepat mungkin,” katanya.

Dalam pada itu, Mohd. Zolkafly berkata, sumbangan kasih itu melibatkan peruntukan sebanyak RM20,500 kepada 25 orang nelayan.

“Bencana banjir menjejaskan seramai 25 orang nelayan berdaftar yang mengalami kerugian melibatkan vesel serta perkakasan menangkap ikan yang telah hanyut dan rosak akibat arus deras,” katanya.

# Unsung heroes of food industry

**B**EHIND the dynamism of Malaysia's food sector is a powerful yet unseen force driven by B40 women, whose determination keeps the informal food economy alive.

Working from cramped PPR (People's Housing Programme) kitchens and makeshift stalls, they sustain thousands of urban households and underpin entire low-income communities, even as their contributions go largely unrecognised.

According to SME Corp's 2025 statistics, micro-enterprises make up about 70.1% of all MSMEs in Malaysia, forming the core of the nation's entrepreneurial landscape.

Although official breakdowns by gender or sector are unavailable, years of community engagement, NGO interventions and academic fieldwork consistently reveal that a significant share of micro-food businesses, especially in PPR communities, are run by women.

This is supported by the Department of Statistics Malaysia's (DOSM) 2024 findings, which show the average Malaysian household has just 1.8 income earners. For B40 families, secondary income from self-employment is no longer optional. It has become a critical means of coping with rising living costs. Within this reality, food micro-businesses are not mere supplements but financial lifelines.

Despite their economic relevance, PPR women operate inside an ecosystem that rarely matches their lived realities. One of their most persistent obstacles is the unrelenting cost-margin squeeze. DOSM data shows national inflation has eased with headline inflation declined to 2.5-3.3% in 2022-2023 and dropped further to around 1.8% in 2024. Food and beverages inflation stabilised between 1.5% and 2% in 2024-2025.

But these figures hide the structural disadvantage faced by micro-entrepreneurs, who cannot buy in bulk. Buying in small

quantities at higher per-unit prices leaves them vulnerable, as even slight price shifts can tighten their already narrow margins. Although food inflation appears stable on paper, micro-entrepreneurs still shoulder structurally higher operating costs. With customers who are equally cash-strapped, raising prices is rarely an option, leaving some women with margins as low as 50 sen per item.

Initiatives such as Menu Rahmah and targeted subsidies ease pressure for consumers, but the upstream cost challenges faced by micro-entrepreneurs largely remain unresolved. Financing remains another barrier.

Bank Negara Malaysia's Financial Stability Review 2023 confirms that micro-enterprises continue to struggle accessing credit due to thin documentation, inconsistent cashflows and a lack of collateral. Many PPR women mix household and business finances, rely on daily revenue to restock ingredients and lack formal cashbooks.

Without records or registration, they often do not qualify for schemes like Tekun, DanaNita Mara or BSN Micro/i programmes. This traps them in a cycle of insufficient working capital that prevents scaling, equipment upgrades or inventory building. Physical conditions compound the problem. A typical PPR flat measures 600 to 700 sq ft and houses several family members. Kitchens double as study areas, dining spaces and laundry zones. Food is prepared where children revise homework and laundry dries, conditions that create operational inefficiencies, limit production capacity and raise food-safety risks.

Several PPRs have introduced shared kitchens to help micro-entrepreneurs prepare food more safely and efficiently. Domestic responsibilities further constrain growth. Many women manage the full value chain, from sourcing, cooking, cleaning, packing, taking orders and occasionally delivering



Years of community engagement, NGO interventions and academic fieldwork consistently reveal that a significant share of micro-food businesses, especially in PPR communities, are run by women.  
- MASRY CHE  
ANI/THE SUN

food, while simultaneously caring for children and elderly parents. Workdays often stretch 14 to 18 hours. With no paid leave, childcare support or formal safety nets, burnout becomes almost inevitable, threatening both livelihood sustainability and family wellbeing.

Digitalisation that is often hailed as the equaliser presents its own obstacles. Unicef and UNFPA's Families on the Edge study in 2021 found low-income urban households frequently rely on a single smartphone shared among family members and often with unstable internet access. This severely restricts women's ability to use digital tools to manage and grow their businesses. Programmes such as PEDJ and MDEC's eUsahawan offer important foundations, but meaningful digital adoption requires ongoing mentorship, simplified tools and community-level support. One-off workshops rarely translate into lasting digital capability when devices are inadequate and digital confidence is low.

Adding to these barriers is the lack of basic financial record-keeping. Without tracking daily sales, cost of goods sold, packaging expenses, transport costs or customer credit, entrepreneurs cannot accurately

evaluate their profitability. Many assume they are doing well because cash moves daily, only to realise once basic records are reconstructed that hidden costs have eaten into most of their earnings. This reflects not negligence, but the absence of practical and accessible accounting tools tailored to micro-business realities. Competition within PPR communities has intensified since the pandemic.

As households sought alternative income sources, many turned to food sales, often producing similar items such as *nasi lemak*, *kuih*, budget meals and frozen snacks within small and saturated markets, where purchasing power is limited. Hyperlocal saturation depresses prices and weakens viability. The emotional toll is significant, with many women experiencing high levels of stress, anxiety and fatigue. Balancing childcare, household survival and fragile micro-businesses creates an invisible burden that often goes unacknowledged.

Despite these challenges, the potential of PPR B40 women remains significant. Their creativity and adaptability show in the way they overcome daily constraints with limited resources. What they lack is

not motivation but an ecosystem built for their realities. With targeted support such as accessible micro-financing, shared kitchens, simple digital tools, basic accounting systems and sustained coaching, they can transition from survival-mode to sustainable entrepreneurship.

To date, the government has provided support for women entrepreneurs through SME Corp, Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development Ministry and targeted PPR programmes like Dapur Digital, but coverage remains limited.

With PPRs and many women still excluded by documentation, location and formality barriers, current initiatives still fall short of reaching those at the margins. If Malaysia wants an inclusive and strong economy, its policies must fully reflect the lived realities of PPR B40 women. They are essential to community stability and the national food sector. When they progress, their families progress and so does Malaysia.

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TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
22/12/2025	THE STAR	ECOWATCH	1

*Star*  
**Ecowatch**

THE STAR, MONDAY 22 DECEMBER 2025

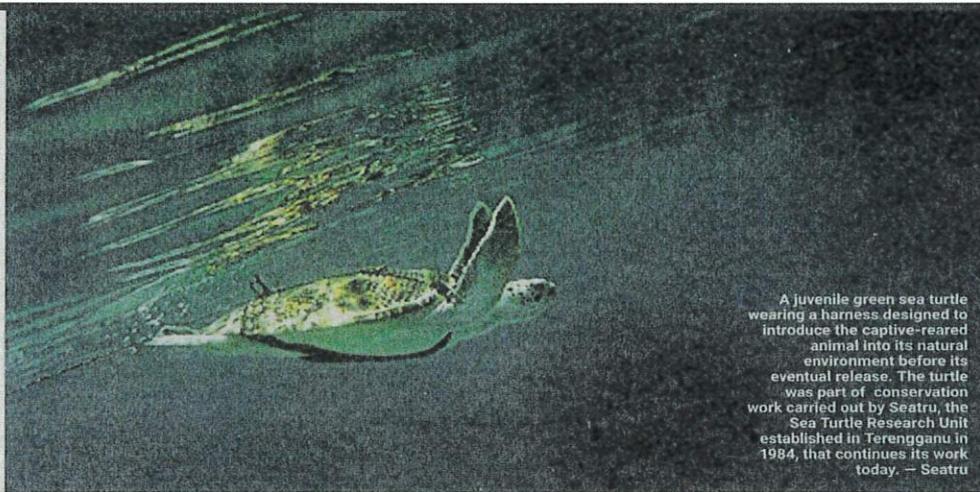


*The long*  
**swim back**

The good news: Green sea turtle numbers are slowly bouncing back. The bad news: Threats to their lives have not diminished, and their cousins – like the olive ridley and hawksbill turtles – are still vulnerable and critically endangered.

2&3

Photo: The Star



A juvenile green sea turtle wearing a harness designed to introduce the captive-reared animal into its natural environment before its eventual release. The turtle was part of conservation work carried out by Seatru, the Sea Turtle Research Unit established in Terengganu in 1984, that continues its work today. — Seatru

# Numbers are up but threats loom large

Stories by SIM LEOI LEOI  
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OFF the coast of Terengganu and along the stretch of its sandy beaches, good news is unfolding.

The Fisheries Department has reported an increase in green sea turtle landings from 3,878 in 2017 to 10,130 in 2023, a spike of over 260%, with a whopping 811,351 eggs laid in 2023 alone.

There's hardly any good news in conservation matters nowadays but that is something to celebrate. And there's more: Years after green sea turtles were put on the list of endangered species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), they are now officially off it. *Chelonia mydas*, said the international conservation body, has improved in status from endangered to least concern.

Making the announcement during the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi on Oct 10, Roderic Mast, co-chair of IUCN's Species Survival Commission Marine Turtle Specialist Group, said the ongoing global recovery of the green sea turtle is a powerful example of what coordinated global conservation over decades can do to stabilise and even restore populations of long-lived marine species.

"Such approaches must focus not only on the turtles, but on keeping their habitats healthy, and their ecological functions intact."

"Sea turtles cannot survive without healthy oceans and coasts, and humans can't either. Sustained conservation efforts are key to assuring that this recovery lasts," he said.

However, in the same press release announcing the recovery of one species, IUCN also revealed that three types of Arctic seal have moved closer to extinction, while more than half of bird species globally are in decline.

Even more sobering was the announcement of the latest species lost to extinction, including the Christmas Island shrew, the slender-billed curlew, a type of cone snail, and the *Diospyros angulata*



Guys sapa2 berminat telur penyau, blih pm symlrm stok sampai 150beji, 1beji rm1.50, sapa cepata dia dapat k, fresh2 baru ambil d pantei

A screenshot from a few years ago of a chat group offering fresh turtle eggs for sale — which is illegal but the practice still continues today.

(Mauritian ebony) tree.

Three Australian mammals — the marl, the south-eastern striped bandicoot, and the Nullarbor barred bandicoot — as well as *Delissea sinuata*, a plant native to the Hawaiian Islands, were assessed for the first time and recorded as extinct, underlining just how tenuous survival is for much of the world's flora and fauna.

Founded in 1948, the IUCN, which works in the field of conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources, is best known for compiling and publishing the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

### Fragile comeback

In Malaysia, the Fisheries Department was delighted to announce those higher numbers for the green sea turtle, locally known as penyau agar.

According to department director-gen-



Rahayu: There needs to be strict enforcement of the laws against the use of illegal fishing gear, egg poaching, and sale of turtle eggs on the black market. — Filepic

eral Datuk Adnan Hussain, the green sea turtle also recorded the highest number of eggs laid among Malaysian turtle species, increasing from 330,793 in 2017 to 811,351 in 2023.

He attributed the increase to conservation efforts, including a programme that saw 5.12 million turtle eggs collected and incubated in conservation centres from 2017 to 2023. From these eggs, 3.62 million hatchlings were released into the sea.

Rahayu Zulkifli, CEO of the Marine Conservation and Research Organisation (Persatuan Pemuliharaan dan Kajian Marin Malaysia or Pullihara), explains that one of the reasons for the IUCN's reclassification of green sea turtles is that other parts of the world have seen a marked increase in their populations.

"In Malaysia, the Sulu Sea Malaysia/Turtle Island Heritage Protected Area is one of the main contributors to this increase. However, it does not mean that it is the same everywhere in the country," she says.

"This, Rahayu says, is one of the weaknesses of the IUCN Red List, which looks only at overall global populations.

"However, since Malaysia does not have its own conservation status of endangered or critically endangered species, our green sea turtles, too, will follow the IUCN reclassification from endangered to least concern despite there being some places locally where the population has not really increased," she says.

An example of that weakness is reflected in giant leatherback sea turtles' listing.

"Globally, the leatherbacks have been reclassified from critically endangered to vulnerable because the Atlantic popula-

### How the IUCN classifies species

- Extinct (EX):** No reasonable doubt that the last individual has died.
- Extinct in the Wild (EW):** Known to survive only in captivity, cultivation or outside its natural range.
- Critically endangered (CR):** Facing extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.
- Endangered (EN):** Facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild.
- Vulnerable (VU):** Facing a high risk of extinction in the wild.
- Near Threatened (NT):** Close to qualifying or likely to qualify for a threatened category in the near future.
- Least Concern (LC):** Population is stable enough that it is unlikely to face extinction in the near future.
- Data Deficient (DD):** Not enough information on abundance or distribution to estimate its risk of extinction.

tion has bounced back.

"But over here in the Eastern Pacific, the population is still critical. Rantau Abang leatherback nests, for example, have remained nil in the past 10 years compared with the 1950s when there were 10,000 annually," she says, referring to the previously prime nesting site for these turtles in Terengganu.

Pulihara's teams are currently engaged in three distinct marine conservation projects, in Lang Tengah Island, Tanjung Jara, and Chakar Hutun Beach, all in Terengganu.

The NGO's main objective is to mitigate the risk of the local extinction of turtles by intercepting and safeguarding turtle eggs from both human poachers and natural predators.

### No finish line

Besides giant leatherbacks and green turtles, the other two species in Malaysia, the olive ridley and the hawksbill, are respectively classified as vulnerable and critically endangered on the IUCN Red List. The leatherback is believed to be extinct on Malaysian shores.

All this points to the challenges that remain beneath the good news.

While Terengganu has banned the sale and consumption of all turtle eggs from June 1, 2022, they can still be found illegally if you know where to look. Turtle-