



Sultan of Kedah, Al Aminul Karim Sultan Sallehuddin Sultan Badlishah, and Sultanah of Kedah, Sultanah Maliha Tengku Ariff, officiating at the launch of Urban Forest 1 in Alor Star yesterday. NSTP PIC BY WAN NABIL NASIR

'CITIES WITHIN A PARK'

Urban Forest initiative to green Kedah

ALOR STAR: Kedah has embarked on an Urban Forest initiative in line with its vision to transform towns and cities statewide into "cities within a park" for a greener and more sustainable urban landscape.

Comptroller of the Kedah Royal Household Datuk Seri Bakar Din said the effort would not only provide ecological balance, but also improve quality of life for city dwellers.

The project, he said, was aimed at greening urban areas as part of the state's "2 Million Tree Planting" programme, which is being carried out over the next five years.

"People often talk about having a park in a city. What we want is the other way round — a city within a park where the entire town is surrounded by trees.

"That is the idea behind Urban Forest," he told reporters after the launch of Urban Forest 1 at Alor Star City Square here yesterday.

The Sultan of Kedah, Al Aminul Karim Sultan Sallehuddin Sultan Badlishah, and the Sultanah of Kedah, Sultanah Maliha Tengku Ariff, officiated at the ceremony under the patronage of the Tunku Mahkota of Kedah, Tunku Shazuddin Ariff Sultan Sallehuddin.

Also present were the Raja Muda of Kedah Tengku Sarafudin Badlishah Sultan Sallehuddin, Raja Puan Muda of Kedah Che Puan

Muda Zaheeda Mohamad Ariff, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor and Media Prima Bhd group chairman Datuk Seri Dr Syed Hussian Aljunid.

Urban Forest 1, launched as a pocket park in the heart of Alor Star, will serve as a model for similar projects in other districts.

Bakar said the initiative was inspired by Sultan Sallehuddin.

"It was Tuanku's idea. He decreed that something must be done to protect the environment and increase awareness of conservation," Bakar said.

The project, he added, would also serve as a new attraction for tourists exploring the state capital's city square and central landmarks.

"We already have Balai Seni, Is-

tana Balai Besar, Balai Nobat, Balai Jam and Masjid Zahir.

"During Ramadan, this area is already popular. With the pocket garden, we add another attraction to the city," he said.

Among the planted species are Tecoma, Pulai, sunflowers and other ornamental plants suited for an urban setting.

"The Tecoma trees are expected to be a major draw, especially during the dry season between January and February when their white and purple blooms brighten the city," Bakar said.

He hoped that local councils would collaborate to expand the concept, with plans already in place to establish Urban Forest 2 here soon before the project is extended to other districts.

	SUBUH (am)	SYURUK	ZUHUR	ASAR (pm)	MAGHRIB	ISYAK
Melaka	5:45	6:54	12:57	4:16	6:58	8:08
Penang	5:55	7:03	1:05	4:24	7:02	8:13
K. Lumpur	5:48	6:56	1:00	4:19	6:59	8:09
Johor Baru	5:38	6:47	12:51	4:10	6:52	8:03
Kuantan	5:42	6:52	12:54	4:13	6:54	8:04
Ipoh	5:52	6:59	1:03	4:22	7:01	8:11