Orang utan bridge hailed for granting safe passage

KOTA KINABALU: A canopy bridge, designed to facilitate the movement of orang utan between forest patches across Sungai Pin, has garnered attention from those advocating for the safe passage of wildlife through plantations.

Although it is not a new feature at the Sungai Pin conservation area in Kinabatangan, it has continued to capture public interest in how such structures reconnect fragmented habitats.

The canopy bridge benefits an estimated 55 orang utan living in the Sungai Pin area as well as other arboreal species such as proboscis monkeys and macaques.

As such, it was one of the conservation initiatives highlighted by SKG Green Sdn Bhd, a state subsidiary owned by Sawit Kinabalu, at a booth set up during a World Orang Utan Day celebration held at Zoo Taiping and Night Safari in Perak over the weekend.

World Orang Utan Day is observed annually to raise awareness about the urgent need to protect orang utan in Borneo and Sumatra. These regions face significant threats to the survival of the apes due to habitat loss and fragmentation.

In a statement, SKG Green said the event brought together conservationists, wildlife agencies and the public to celebrate Malaysia's continuing efforts to protect one of the world's most endangered great apes.

"It was a meaningful opportunity to highlight how collaboration between government, industry, and conservation partners can make a real difference in protecting wildlife such as the orang utan," said SKG Green senior manager of conservation and biodiversity Charis Saliun.

He said the Sungai Pin conservation area is part of the Orang Utan Diplomacy Programme, an initiative led by the Malaysian Palm Oil Green Conservation Foundation in collaboration with Borneo Samudera Sdn Bhd.

It aims to ensure the orang utan can move freely in their natural habitat without disturbances from human activities or plantation operations.

Charis said the Sungai Pin conservation area's designation as a High Conservation Value area highlights its importance as a sanctuary for orang utan and other endangered species.

"The Sungai Pin conservation area represents a shared effort to preserve biodiversity, empower local communities and ensure that Sabah's natural heritage continues to thrive," Charis said.