

# Orang Asli, military vets to help protect wildlife

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KUALA LIPIS: The Biodiversity Protection and Patrolling Programme (BP3) for the protection of national forest treasures by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Perhilitan) is being reinforced with the involvement of military veterans and the Orang Asli as wildlife rangers in areas of intrusions.

Energy and Natural Resources Minister Datuk Dr Shamsul Anuar Nasarah said that initially, 100 military veterans and 50 Orang Asli were appointed after completing a 10-day basic training course beginning June 20, with a contractual appointment.

In addition to a monthly service wage, Shamsul said they also received allowances and official duty facilities for the duration of their service in assisting to guard the borders. This included performing smart patrolling tasks at National Parks, Wildlife Reserves, Permanent Forest reserves and border control posts.

"Other than providing them with employment opportunities, I am confident that their experience and expertise will enhance the effectiveness of enforcement to curb encroachment, illegal logging and wildlife hunting."

Shamsul was at a ceremony to hand over credentials to wildlife rangers at the Sungai Relau National Park here yesterday.

The wildlife rangers will be stationed at National Parks in Pahang, Kelantan, Terengganu, Penang and Endau-Rompin Johor.

Other areas include the Royal Belum in Perak, and at three wildlife reserves, namely, in Sungkai, Perak; Sungai Dusun, Selangor and Kuala Krau, Pahang.

Among the contents of their course were wildlife management, border management, survival skills training and basic use of navigation and communication equipment.

Shamsul also thanked the Finance Ministry for approving the allocation to appoint the wildlife rangers with the full co-operation of the Veteran Affairs Department of the Malaysian Armed Forces and the Department of Orang Asli Development. - BERNAMA