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Soldier finds beauty on the battlefield

Artist falls in love with nature while in the jungle

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RETIRED soldier Abdul Ghani Ahmad spent over 20 years in the jungle fighting the communists.

Despite facing blood and death on the battlefield, the then corporal still managed to find the beauty in nature.

"The trees, the colourful flowers and all kind of living creatures enlightened my days in the jungle.

"Nature is amazing. Seeing the way the wild creatures strove to survive and how they protected themselves from their enemies had raised my spirits to fight for the country," he said.

Since then, Abdul Ghani has a fond love for the forests and will do everything to preserve nature.

After he retired, Abdul Ghani was inspired by a Malay saying that said nothing compared with the beauty of a painting and this led him to pick up his brushes.

Now, he draws flora and fauna to remind people of the importance of preserving the environment through art.

The 64-year-old self-taught artist also plants his own vegetables and fruits at his home in Gombak.

To further promote the green message, he recently held a joint-exhibition with fellow green artists Mohd Rizlan Kamaruddin and Rafie Abdul Rahman.

The exhibition, themed *The Enchanting World of FRIM on Canvas in the Eyes of Rizlan, Ghani and Rafie*, is being held at the National Art Gallery until June 16.

Natural Resources and Environment Ministry deputy director-general Aziyah Mohamed said

part of the profits from the sale of the paintings would be channelled to the environmental education fund of FRIM (Forest Research Institute Malaysia).

Mohd Rizlan, 66, said nature was a gift of God to all living things on earth and we must make sure that it was well-preserved.

He said nature was unique as it changed every second, depending on the sunlight, weather and other elements.

"I see nature with my mind's eye and capture the most beautiful moments to share with the others. Behind every painting, there is a message," he said.

Art teacher Rafie said he would bring his students for outdoor activities, encouraging them to draw nature while providing knowledge on preserving the environment.

He hoped the exhibition would serve its purpose and help raise awareness.



Interesting eye: Abdul Ghani and some of his paintings that are on display.



Have a look: Mohd Rizlan showing one of his artworks during the exhibition.